



Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5761st meeting

Wednesday, 17 October 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Christian	(Ghana)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Slovakia	Mr. Matulay
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott

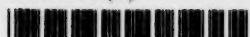
Agenda

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its first session (S/2007/458)

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07-54678 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Post-conflict peacebuilding

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its first session (S/2007/458)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Burundi, the Netherlands, Norway and Sierra Leone, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Yukio Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Yukio Takasu, and invite him to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its first session, document S/2007/458.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Yukio Takasu, Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Mr. Takasu: First of all, on behalf of the members of the Peacebuilding Commission, allow me to express our heartfelt gratitude to you, Mr. President, for providing a timely opportunity to discuss the annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission.

In September 2005, our leaders adopted the World Summit Outcome Document, which explicitly emphasized the need for a "coordinated, coherent and integrated approach to post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation with a view to achieving sustainable peace" (*General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 97*). The Outcome Document further states that the Commission was established "to bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery" (*para. 98*).

With that in mind, let me briefly look back on the first year of the work of the Commission. The first annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission, as contained in document S/2007/458, provides a detailed account of the work and activities of the Commission during the first year of its operation. The process of compiling the report reflected the seriousness with which the Commission's membership has undertaken its work and the significance it attaches to its anticipated contribution to peace consolidation and the promotion of national ownership of peacebuilding measures in post-conflict situations. Here, I would like to pay special tribute to Ambassador Gaspar Martins of Angola for his dedication and leadership in steering the initial stage of the Commission's work.

In the course of approximately 50 formal and informal meetings and briefings held in its various configurations, the Peacebuilding Commission addressed critical organizational, methodological and thematic issues, as well as the country-specific issues of Burundi and Sierra Leone, coordinating various contributions to sustainable peace and opening avenues for mutual commitments between the international community and the countries under consideration. I believe that, in its first year, the Peacebuilding Commission contributed significantly to the promotion of integrated post-conflict peacebuilding strategies in Burundi and Sierra Leone by deepening the dialogue with all relevant stakeholders. As mentioned in the annual report, the Commission intends to further strengthen the effectiveness of its engagement with Burundi and Sierra Leone.

The Commission endorsed the development of the Integrated Peacebuilding Strategy (IPBS) for Burundi, of which the Strategic Framework is an important step. A key next step is to develop the in-country tracking and monitoring mechanism, which we already began to take under the guidance of the coordinating Chair, Ambassador Johan Løvald of Norway.

In Sierra Leone, the presidential and parliamentary elections were held successfully. Our coordinating Chair of the country-specific meeting on Sierra Leone, Ambassador Frank Majoer of the Netherlands, has just come back from Sierra Leone with the most updated information. Work will continue on the draft of IPBS, so that we may come to an agreement as soon as possible.

The Peacebuilding Commission also sought to accumulate best practices and lessons learned on some critical peacebuilding issues. Through the Working Group on Lessons Learned, the Commission was able to benefit from existing experiences of peace consolidation on such important issues as post-conflict elections and regional approaches to peacebuilding. The Working Group, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Gallardo Hernández of El Salvador, intends to consider other relevant issues in the second year.

As clearly underlined in its first annual report, the Peacebuilding Commission faced challenges during the initial phase of establishing its organizational structures, defining its working methods and finding ways to fulfil its core mandates. Some of those challenges will be the subject of additional discussion during the second session. The "Conclusions" section of the report is a reflection on key outstanding issues and challenges before the Commission, namely, the development of monitoring and tracking mechanisms, working methods, advocacy, the Peacebuilding Fund and relationships with other relevant bodies.

The United Nations peacebuilding architecture is now fully in place: the Peacebuilding Commission, comprised of the Organizational Committee, the country-specific meetings and the Working Group on Lessons Learned; the Peacebuilding Fund and its advisory group; and the Peacebuilding Support Office. As the Commission is entering its second year of activity, we must ensure that its activities are carried out in a coherent and integrated manner. We believe it

appropriate for the Commission to begin addressing the issues to be considered in adding new countries to the Commission's agenda, in close consultation with the referring bodies, including the Security Council.

Secondly, strengthening the Commission's relationship with relevant bodies and actors, such as the United Nations principal organs, namely the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat, funds and programmes, regional and subregional organizations, international financial institutions and civil society, is essential. As part of such efforts, I myself, as Chairman of the Commission, will make constant efforts and avail myself of every opportunity to establish closer working relationships with those organizations. Therefore, Mr. President, I look forward to working closely with you and the Security Council to discharge most effectively the mandates of the Commission and to achieve the purpose of the Commission, which is to bring real beneficial change and to have a tangible impact on the countries and communities in post-conflict situations.

Exploring thematic issues relevant to peacebuilding is also a matter of great importance. I am particularly convinced that discussing broad policy guidance on peacebuilding activities in general, without focusing on a specific country, is worth pursuing.

Raising awareness of the Commission's work, not only among relevant actors but also among the public at large, would greatly enhance the understanding of and bring necessary attention to the work of the Commission and the countries under its consideration. In that regard, we intend to make every effort to heighten the visibility of the Commission's work. At the same time, we would hope for individual Member States to join our efforts to promote the work of the Commission.

As Chairman of the Commission, I would like to assure all members of the Security Council of our full dedication and commitment to the success of the Commission. In that spirit, we ask all of you to lend your valuable and much-needed support to our work at the Commission.

The President: I thank Mr. Takasu for his statement.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to ask all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, I would like to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Japan, Yukio Takasu, on his appointment to the post of Chairman of the Commission. We would also like to thank the previous Chairmen, Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins and Kenzo Oshima, for the efforts they made in the work of the Commission and the initial stage of its institutional formation.

On the whole, we have a positive view of the first year of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. A new institutional mechanism has been created, which has been given important objectives for coordinating peacebuilding activity. The procedures, format and priorities for activity have been set down. The body has considerable potential and is capable, with time, of becoming one of the key international instruments in this sphere.

A great deal of work has been done on the Commission's country-specific files on Burundi and Sierra Leone. In particular, the existing challenges and gaps in the area of peacebuilding in those countries have already been determined. At the present stage, the objective is achieving progress in the field through a coordinated implementation of the Integrated Peacebuilding Strategies in the launching of monitoring mechanisms, with a leading role played by the Governments of the countries that are recipients of assistance.

At the same time, the Commission has not yet been able to overcome the difficulties it encountered in setting up its work. Particular attention should be paid to issues of improving cooperation onsite in all areas of peacebuilding processes and a harmonious coordination of the activities of the Commission with the existing mechanisms for coordination, first and foremost within the United Nations.

In addition, there is a need to establish a clear balance between the responsibilities of Governments and international partners without overloading national

authorities with excessive obligations and without duplicating assistance programmes. Any peacebuilding activity must be based on broad national dialogue with all political forces.

In that sense, we are naturally concerned by the existing political and institutional crisis in Burundi in connection with the refusal of the opposition factions to participate in the joint mechanism for verification and observation of the ceasefire. We believe that the Government of Burundi and the international community must make all possible efforts to defuse the political situation in the country and ensure the speedy implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement of 7 September 2006. We welcome the mediation efforts of the Republic of South Africa and the regional peace initiatives, in particular of Uganda and Tanzania.

We would like to express our satisfaction at the presidential and parliamentary elections that took place in August 2007 in Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone leadership and people demonstrated their readiness to follow the path of democratic progress and sustainable development. Four priority areas for peacebuilding activities have been identified in Sierra Leone. Now, the Government, with the support of the Commission, the donor community, civil society, nongovernmental organizations and regional and international partners, must focus on developing a strategy for cooperation in the area of peacebuilding. We believe that work will be concluded on the draft by the end of this year.

Of great significance also is the functioning of the monitoring mechanisms of the Integrated Peacebuilding Strategies and other assistance programmes, most notably the poverty reduction strategy. In Burundi, work on the establishment of a monitoring and control mechanism is already under way and the proper functioning of the partners' coordination group must be ensured. In Sierra Leone, particular support to national control mechanisms is needed, in particular the recently created United Nations office for development coordination.

In our view, the objectives of the Commission are enhancing the coordination and productivity of the international community's peacebuilding activities in defining, in close interaction with the Government of the country that is the recipient of assistance, high-priority areas for peacebuilding and the mobilization of donor resources. Of particular importance is the

objective of strengthening the integral link between the Commission and the Security Council on the issues on the agenda of both bodies. It is important to ensure a timely exchange of information and to see that the two bodies complement each other in partnership fashion. We believe that the Council, in its work on Burundi and Sierra Leone, must take into account the recommendations of the Commission. Naturally, this will take place in parallel to the development of links by the Commission with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and also with other United Nations bodies, programmes and funds, the donor community and regional organizations.

Currently, the Commission has before it the inclusion of new countries in its agenda. We believe that a decision, after appropriate open discussion, should take into account whether a given country has a real need for international assistance in post-conflict recovery, together with the progress made by the Commission on the country files under its consideration, as well as on the understanding that the Commission is not an additional source of external financing but is, above all, a coordinating and consultative mechanism.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am happy to speak of the concrete achievements of the Peacebuilding Commission in the field, the experience obtained thus far, the general links with this Council as well as the upcoming challenges confronting it.

Permanent peace is an objective that must be accompanied, from an early stage, by a comprehensive project on democracy, social inclusion, institutional foundations and sustainable economic advances. Security, development and respect for human rights reinforce each other. The idea of a new structure for peacebuilding is to strengthen the ability of the United Nations to assist countries to move from conflict situations into lasting and sustainable peace. As has been clearly shown in the case of several countries included in this Council's agenda, peacebuilding activities should be integrated even during peacekeeping operations, that is, once there is an appropriate level of stabilization.

It is true that the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council have their own roles in terms of peacebuilding. However, experience has shown that there is a need for central coordination in all these roles at the heart of the

system, and this is a task that the Peacebuilding Commission has taken up with great dynamism.

Even more important than coordination is the drawing up of integrated, peacebuilding strategies which need to be adjusted to the specific needs of each country and which can serve as a guide in that difficult process of transitioning from a chaotic situation to tangible achievements in peacebuilding, such as disarmament, demobilization, integration and reconciliation, the protection of vulnerable populations, the reform of key institutions like the judiciary and the security services, good governance, the creation of democratic customs and tolerance, and the building of a viable economy.

The key task of the Commission is identifying the critical problems related to peacebuilding and generally linked to the deep-rooted causes of conflict. They vary according to country. Failing to pay attention to these problems can lead to a renewal of violence.

In this regard, I would like to highlight the task of identifying specific areas of activity for Burundi and Sierra Leone, the two countries currently on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. The formulation of the Strategic Framework for Burundi marked a considerable advance towards outlining an integrated strategy, and we hope that it will be followed by something similar for Sierra Leone, a country which recently held successful elections.

In its first months of activity, besides addressing its rules of procedure and its organization and methods of work, the Commission adopted from the outset two criteria that we feel are crucial; it sought precise information in the field, and it maintained that the authorities and the society of the country under consideration should steer the process and constantly express their own priorities and opinions. This broad approach has been behind the tangible advances which have been achieved so far and which will allow us to gradually include new countries in the agenda.

Apart from the central role of and the guidance given by the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, we should also point to the importance of the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office, headed by Carolyn McAskie. With regard to operational challenges, it is clear that the Commission still has much to do in terms of the monitoring systems for the planned strategies,

both quantitatively and qualitatively. Now we need to make the leap towards more solid achievements in the field, with a more active participation by the respective countries' civil societies.

The Peacebuilding Commission, a governmental advisory body, has the difficult task of improving its links with this Council, with the General Assembly, with the Economic and Social Council and with the different agencies and departments of the United Nations system. An important example of this desire for interaction, which is very practical, is the letter that the Chairman of the Burundi configuration in the Commission sent to the Council, among others, on 25 September, with specific recommendations. The Commission could have a crucial role in terms of advising the Council in very difficult and delicate moments, such as, for example, before the renewal of a mandate of a peacekeeping operation.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank Ambassadors Gaspar Martins of Angola and Takasu of Japan first and present Chairs of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, for their work; the representatives of the Netherlands and Norway, Chairs of the country-specific meetings on Sierra Leone and Burundi; and Ambassador Gallardo Hernández of El Salvador for her outstanding work in the Working Group on Lessons Learned. Peru, along with the rest of the international community, has great hopes for the effective work of the Peacebuilding Commission. What has been achieved thus far augurs well for the future.

Mr. Okio (Congo) (spoke in French): My delegation would like to thank the President for having convened this meeting to consider the first report of the Peacebuilding Commission, a body whose establishment is clearly one of the best outcomes of the 2005 World Summit.

The comprehensive approach which, at the time, inspired the decision on peacebuilding on the part of the world's highest-level leaders, is starting to bear fruit in terms of the work carried out in one year by the Peacebuilding Commission. My delegation would like to pay tribute to His Excellency Mr. Gaspar Martins, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Angola, who chaired the Commission from the very outset and, through him, to all those who have been working tirelessly with him to bring about the birth of this body.

As is the case with a newborn baby, we all know that it is the very first moments of life that require the greatest attention and care. The key issue here will never be which parent provided more care to the newborn, but rather whether the pooling of efforts in an ongoing interaction was able to ensure the well-being and the best possible development of the newborn. Because of the number of meetings held, the high quality of the results obtained and the commitment in the field, as is indicated in the report of the Secretary-General in document A/62/137, these men and women serving the cause of peace have enabled the United Nations to begin this project successfully, and we congratulate them.

We would like to express our gratitude to Carolyn McAskie, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, whose commitment and contributions to getting the Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund functioning have been decisive.

Allow me to congratulate Ambassador Yukio Takasu, the new Chairperson of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, for the excellent briefing he has just given us. Through him, I would also like to thank Japan for its unwavering commitment to and support for the work of the Commission, as well as for its contribution to the Peacebuilding Fund. My delegation would like to wish Mr. Takasu every success in his difficult task and in overseeing the future phases of that new body.

For a year now, the Peacebuilding Commission has been carrying out its challenging functions under the constant and careful monitoring of the bodies that established it. The interaction with those bodies did not have the paralyzing effect we had feared, although it seems that it is necessary to further clarify the relationship between the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council as the activity of the Peacebuilding Commission expands.

My delegation believes that, in that tripartite relationship, the Security Council has continued to play its role while being aware of the challenges that arise from the situations on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission and while daily following their development in the light of its own agenda. In that regard, it is clear that the Security Council is the body best equipped to assess the benefits produced by the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission in the two

countries on the Commission's agenda — Burundi and Sierra Leone — in regard to the developments in those countries in recent months. For example, free and transparent presidential and legislative elections were held in Sierra Leone, leading to the establishment of a new Government.

Nevertheless, given the fragile nature of the situation in those two countries, we must continue to accord them attention at the highest level. Even though there are gaps in those two successful experiences, as in all human undertakings, the Council can learn useful lessons from them for the determination of the criteria for inscribing new countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission.

As the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/458) points out, by putting in place integrated peacebuilding strategies the Peacebuilding Commission has progressively developed a better understanding of the issues and challenges in the field. By adopting a country-specific approach, the Commission has been able to tailor its efforts to the requirements on the ground and to engage in productive dialogue with local authorities and other stakeholders in the search for appropriate strategies. However, the partnership with Sierra Leone and Burundi must be based on national ownership of the process and respect for their own responsibilities and commitments, with a view to overcoming the numerous current and future challenges. Moreover, close coordination between the Commission, national actors and civil society is essential, both in determining goals and in evaluating the efforts undertaken. That entails strengthening on-the-ground verification and follow-up mechanisms.

We would like to emphasize that the summary notes of the Working Group on Lessons Learned underscored the need to include the regional element in peacebuilding strategies for Burundi and Sierra Leone. We believe that that is valid, including for future cases. In some countries conflicts are fuelled by the destabilization of an entire region or of neighbouring countries — as is the case with the conflicts in the Great Lakes region, the complexity of which is not well understood. With regard to the two countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, we would suggest that the international community should take advantage of the regional actors as intermediaries and of their involvement in the search for sustainable and lasting solutions.

My delegation fully agrees with the methods of work of the Peacebuilding Commission, especially as regards field missions, video-conferencing with major actors on the ground, thematic and country-specific meetings, and presentations by senior officials and experts. However, we believe that, in order to raise the profile of the Commission's work, it may sometimes be necessary to hold coordination meetings in countries concerned.

Lastly, the innovative mechanism that is the Peacebuilding Fund was established, among other things, to provide crucial support during the early stages of a peace process. In that connection, my delegation would like to express its support for the Secretary-General's appeal for contributions to the Fund in order to meet its initial goal of \$250 million. In that regard, it would be useful to hold donor meetings of bilateral and multilateral partners, as well as to promote interaction between the Fund's Advisory Group and the members of the Commission. More generally, given the lessons learned from the Fund's current functioning, there is a need for clarification about its relationship with the Peacebuilding Commission and about the process of disbursing funds.

In conclusion, and given the approach adopted by Guinea-Bissau — whose desire to be inscribed on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission Congo supports — my delegation would like to point out that the Council should pay a bit more attention to the issue of placing new countries on the Commission's agenda, with a view to clearly defining the modalities for inscription. We agree that it would be useful to draft the procedure in such a way as to take into account States with a genuine and urgent need for assistance.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): Let me first express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate on the first report of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2007/458). We would also like to thank the Peacebuilding Commission for the presentation of its report, as well as its Chairperson, Ambassador Yukio Takasu of Japan for his remarks.

Having been involved in the deliberations on the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, and as a member of the Commission, Indonesia is pleased to see the Commission and the associated Peacebuilding Fund embark upon the fulfilment of their mandates in the first year. It has not been easy for the Commission

to address the issues of its direction and procedures and at the same time take up the demanding cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone. But it is obvious from the report that the Commission has worked hard in trying to fill the gap in the international post-conflict architecture, which was highlighted in the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

At this juncture, my delegation would like to focus on some of the lessons learned in the past year and to explore practical ways and means by which the Council, pursuant to its role, could assist the Commission to fulfil its goals laid out in resolution 1645 (2005).

First, the peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations is now in place. As the conclusion of the report of the Peacebuilding Commission pertinently states, the biggest remaining challenge is how to concretely implement peacebuilding strategies in the field. The fine-tuning efforts by the peacebuilding system in New York should have an impact on the ground that should be felt directly by the community concerned. Maximum effects will be achieved if the Peacebuilding Commission focuses on being practical and results-oriented.

Secondly, the maximum effect in the field can be fulfilled if firm support is offered by all the principal organs of the United Nations, the agencies of the United Nations system and the non-United Nations institutions concerned. Their backing will bolster the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission and allow the Commission to give its undivided attention to the profound post-conflict issues before it.

As was pointed out last week by some delegations, including my own, during the General Assembly's debate on the reports of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, we expect the Commission's Organizational Committee to take up specific thematic issues, apart from considering them under the country-specific format.

Thirdly, the Commission has rightly emphasized the importance of addressing good governance, the rule of law, security sector reform, the fight against corruption and human rights for all — the necessary ingredients for the formation of a pluralistic and tolerant society. But the nexus between peace and development is paramount, and it also needs to be clearly incorporated in the outcomes of the Peacebuilding Commission. Lasting peace cannot be achieved in the absence of economic development and

an improvement in State capacity. Paying equal attention to the issues of security, democracy and development is key to nurturing a strong pluralistic society.

Fourthly, national ownership is fundamental, but it will emerge only when the post-conflict priorities of a Government are duly respected and become the blueprint for the relevant national and international actors. The Peacebuilding Commission needs to maintain this as its core principle and practice it.

Fifth, in the second year, we expect that the Organizational Committee will expeditiously agree on the as-yet unsettled issues and enhance focus on the substantive factors. It is our view that the Organizational Committee should be the focal point of all the Commission's activities. For its part, the Commission should avoid the misconception that there is a different Commission for each country case and for which there are different country-specific configurations.

Sixth, the Council should continue to work with the Peacebuilding Commission in developing a well-functioning peacebuilding architecture of which the Commission is at the core, complementary with the role and mandates of the Council. Indonesia is aware that some members of the Council have emphasized previously that the Peacebuilding Commission is by nature simply an advisory body of the Council. While recognizing the limited nature of the Commission, the Council should give it more space to innovatively develop its international standing and receive needed international media and public attention. Moreover, the Council should encourage the Commission to reach out and explore engagement with such non-traditional partners as the corporate sector.

As its last point, my delegation would like to touch upon the recent discussions in the Council on how to put new countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. That implies that the Council should start considering a sort of internal referral mechanism. With a view to having a flexible mechanism, there are some approaches that could be carefully considered when the Council draws up its internal mechanism.

The whole process should start from the candidate country's demonstrated willingness to be included on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda.

The Council can invite the candidate country to have a prior consultation with the Council.

We recognize that it is a discretionary power of the Council to make final referral; yet, in order to have a smooth process of referral, the Chairman of the Commission should be kept informed and consulted by the Council. From that preliminary exchange with the Commission, the Council will then be in a better position to give its opinion on the capacity and ability of the Commission to handle a new country. The Council should be convinced that, by referring the country to the Commission's agenda, the Commission could give added value in peace consolidation. The Council may indicate specific challenges posed by the candidate country. Those specific challenges should be drawn up in close coordination with the country concerned and be based on the principle of national ownership.

In closing, allow me to reiterate Indonesia's commitment to the cause of the Peacebuilding Commission. We will continue to engage with others towards our aim of making the outcomes of the Commission tangible.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes the Peacebuilding Commission's submission to the Security Council of the first report on its work. We thank you, Sir, for your timely convening of this meeting, which offers us a good opportunity to exchange views.

The Chinese delegation thanks Ambassador Gaspar Martins of Angola for his outstanding work, and congratulates Japan on assuming the chairmanship of the Peacebuilding Commission. We trust that, under the leadership of Ambassador Yukio Takasu, the Commission's work will be fruitful in the coming year.

Last week, in the General Assembly's discussion of the Peacebuilding Commission, speakers generally expressed their high appreciation for the Commission's work in its first year. Its accomplishments include the virtual completion of its organizational and procedural work and the provision of assistance to Burundi and Sierra Leone in their peacebuilding processes through country-specific configurations. At the same time, all speakers expressed their high hopes for the Commission's work in the year ahead.

It is generally believed that the Commission faces the following urgent tasks: coordinating with the

United Nations system, playing its value-added role to the full, adequately negotiating the balance between partnership and ownership, and exploiting its catalysing functions. In that regard, the Chinese delegation wishes to make the following observations.

First, the Peacebuilding Commission should identify its appropriate relationships with the organs and bodies of the United Nations system. Within the United Nations, the Commission should strengthen its interaction with the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. In the field, it should make full use of the resources of various projects, funds and peacekeeping missions so as to avoid institutional duplication, resulting in waste.

Secondly, the Commission should effectively play its value-added role. Given the high expectations of the people of Burundi and Sierra Leone, the Commission's work must yield palpable results. It should complete and improve on the integrated peacebuilding strategies and swiftly formulate simple tracking and monitoring mechanisms so as to ensure that all sides fulfil their obligations. The priority areas identified in the strategies should not only include human rights protection, justice and security sector reform, but also address with equal urgency the root causes of conflict, such as poverty and uneven development.

Thirdly, the Commission should adeptly manage the balance between partnership and ownership. In the partnership between the international community and a given country, embodied in the Peacebuilding Commission, the former provides necessary assistance to the latter. A partner can only be a participant, however; a country's fate lies in its own hands. The international community should avoid taking over.

Fourthly, the Commission should establish close ties with the Peacebuilding Fund. Although the Commission cannot micromanage the Fund, a natural relationship exists between them. Established priority areas should be the focal points for support from the Fund. The Secretary-General should provide the Commission with more timely briefings on the operation and implementation of the Fund's projects so as to ensure consistency and transparency in its management.

The Security Council is part of the umbrella under which the Peacebuilding Commission functions

and should therefore strengthen communication between them, ensuring interaction through formal meetings and informal exchanges. The Council can guide the Commission's work and should, to the greatest possible extent, solicit the Commission's expert recommendations so as to devise flexible and workable guiding principles. Moreover, in light of specific issues on its agenda, the Security Council can study potential new subjects for the Commission's consideration.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): First of all, I wish to thank you, Sir, for organizing this debate, which may help point the discussion on the way forward, and the Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Takasu, for his presentation.

As a member of the Organizational Committee, Italy fully shares and strongly supports Mr. Takasu's agenda, which is our own agenda and an ambitious agenda, as it must be. All of us who took part in the run-up to the Summit discussing this issue, and after the Summit in the run-up to the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, remember very well what we had in mind and what were our expectations and ambitions. I think that, certainly, we must have a realistic and pragmatic approach, but we must also, I repeat, be ambitious. We must have an ambitious agenda so as to live up to the expectations that were the expectations of our leaders in 2005. It would be very sad, to say the least, if we settled for less.

At the outset, I also wish to commend the former Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Permanent Representative of Angola, for his outstanding efforts in laying the foundation for the Commission's work. The Peacebuilding Commission has succeeded in building its credibility by adopting rules and working methods, developing implementation strategies for countries on the agenda and bringing all the stakeholders together to work towards the same goals, thereby avoiding waste of resources and overlap of programmes. It has not been an easy task, as has been recalled. Thanks to Ambassador Ismael Gaspar Martins' leadership and patience — a lot of patience — we succeeded.

On that basis — and, I wish to emphasize, thanks to the commitment of the Coordinators of the country-specific configurations, the Permanent Representatives of the Netherlands and of Norway — the Commission has adopted a Strategic Framework for Burundi and is

currently working on a strategy for Sierra Leone, actively involving all the stakeholders through the United Nations Office on the ground and the Peacebuilding Support Office. I also join others in expressing strong appreciation for the work of Ambassador Gallardo Hernández as Vice-Chair of the Commission and as Chair of the Working Group on Lessons Learned. Here, I express my disappointment that we are not able to listen to her today on the issue of lessons learned.

Let me also express my strong disappointment at not being able to listen to the voice of the European Union — that is to say, the voice of the most important donor to the United Nations in this field — and to not be able to listen to the voice of Jamaica as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) coordinator, because NAM has a very special take and specific interest on the issue we are discussing today. And, if I am not wrong, all of us around this table are here on behalf of the membership, and being here on behalf of the membership, we have to listen to the membership. And I wonder how we think, for example, that we can encourage the European Union and its 27 member countries to go on being the main donors and to be in the vanguard in implementation and in supporting the Peacebuilding Commission if we do not hear the voice of the European Union around this table.

Now we have to develop a reliable mechanism for monitoring and tracking mutual commitments and trends in the peacebuilding process, without increasing the burden on national Governments. It is of great importance for the effective coordination and strategic advice we all expect from the Peacebuilding Commission that all relevant actors be included in the country-specific configurations. That is why we favour the participation of the European Union, alongside the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The same holds true for the involvement of civil society, once the guidelines have been adopted for its participation in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. Now it is crucial to develop an active policy that gears those relationships towards concrete results.

As noted by previous speakers, significant achievements have undoubtedly been made thus far. But one year on, we have to move forward and address new challenges in a creative and flexible way that will help to develop policies that fit diverse situations. If the Peacebuilding Commission wishes to live up to the

ambitions that I mentioned before, it must now articulate a richer and more varied agenda, enlarging its vision of the peace process and its range of action.

First of all, we should start looking at peace processes as a whole. When considering the establishment of a new peacekeeping mission, the Security Council could, as appropriate, take advantage of the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission so that an effective peacebuilding strategy could be envisaged at the earliest possible stage. The entire process centred on the Peacebuilding Commission should be conceived as a relay race, if I may put it that way, involving all the stakeholders. If we do not think in terms of integrated planning processes, we risk failure, wasted effort and a return to conflict.

The Peacebuilding Commission should therefore take on a more proactive role, on a wider radar screen, so to speak, in order to better assure the continuity of what the international community is doing and intends to do to stabilize a country. In line with such an approach and in order to fully comply with its role as an advisory body of the Council, as envisaged by resolution 1645 (2005), the Peacebuilding Commission might become a sort of permanent observatory of potential new countries that are on their way to exiting the immediate conflict phase.

From such a perspective, it should work together better and more effectively with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the whole United Nations system to be ready — at the appropriate time and upon request — to address critical situations. That would be a marked improvement over the current procedure of simply waiting until a situation is placed on the table of the Peacebuilding Commission, consequently placing it at the starting point of a process, with the result of losing time and, thus, effectiveness and efficiency. The point is that, when the Peacebuilding Commission has a country situation on its table and begins working on it, that should not be the starting point of a process. Instead, we should already have done our homework in parallel with the peacekeeping aspect. That is why I am speaking of a sort of relay race. At a certain moment, the previous runner — peacekeeping — passes the baton to the next one, who continues the race but who is already prepared rather than starting from scratch.

The Peacebuilding Commission will be judged by concrete results on the ground. Allow me then to make some concrete suggestions for the new Chairman, Ambassador Takasu. He has already covered these areas, in part, in his briefing, so in fact I am only emphasizing what he said earlier. Italy reiterates here its strong appreciation for the work he has already done and again assures him of its strongest support.

First, we must enhance dialogue and focus coordination among all the stakeholders, building on projects already implemented or approved with full respect for national ownership of the process. Here, I also wish to stress, as has recently been said in connection with Afghanistan, that in talking about coordination, the point is that people must be ready to be coordinated. That is also an issue that may cause problems once we are on the ground.

Secondly, we have to involve the international financial institutions at all levels — on the ground, at headquarters and on the executive boards. This has already been said, but we must have more involvement than we have had until now.

Thirdly, we must affirm the strategic role of the Peacebuilding Commission by developing and implementing the integrated peacebuilding strategies, to which all the stakeholders, starting with the United Nations system, should refer, and by designing a credible mechanism to monitor the stabilization process.

Fourthly, we should enlarge the agenda not only by gradually increasing the number of countries but also by increasing the number of thematic debates that might support action on the ground.

Fifthly, we should organize more active participation of the Peacebuilding Commission on the ground by building a more intense relationship with the United Nations country offices, the Resident Coordinators and others.

Sixthly, we must enhance the active involvement of regional and subregional organizations. That is an essential point.

And finally, we must envisage, with the help of the Peacebuilding Support Office, a strategy for reaching out to the donor community and marshalling the resources necessary to implement peacebuilding

strategies without duplication. Given the drastic need for resources, it is all the more important to use them better and to try to achieve predictable financing for medium-term and long-term interventions.

I would also add that I believe that the problem is not the financial resources. When there are ideas and projects — valid projects — the money will come. Let us not focus on marshalling resources — money, money, money. Money will come. The point is elsewhere; the critical point is to plan what we want to do. When we have the projects, the money will come. In fact just yesterday my Ministry, in announcing that we are contributing another €2 million to the Peacebuilding Fund, told me to stress that more millions could very well come, but that we had to be clear about where they would be spent.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized the debate that has brought us together today. Last week, the General Assembly held its annual debate on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2007/458-A/62/137) and the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/62/138). You yourself, Sir, have been elected a Vice-Chairperson of the Commission. I see this as an example and a welcome sign of good cooperation between the Commission and the two organs upon which it relies.

Like our Italian colleague, we regret that it has not been possible for the European Union and other important speakers to participate in this debate.

I turn now to the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission over the past year, as described in its report. Thanks to the Chairman and other officers of the Commission and the coordinators of the two country-specific configurations, our colleagues from Norway and the Netherlands, a milestone has been achieved: that of establishing the Commission in the administrative and institutional sense. That was not easy because of the unavoidable delays, rivalries and misunderstandings which occur when coordination mechanisms are created. That hampered the beginnings of the Commission to be sure, but today everyone seems to have understood that it was in no one's interest, and especially not in the interest of the countries under consideration, to continue along that path.

The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and, in its wake, the Peacebuilding

Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund, should enable countries under consideration to emerge quickly and genuinely from crises in which they find themselves and to return to path of sustainable development. It is by that very concrete criterion that we would like to see the Council measure the Commission's progress.

The Peacebuilding Commission has started its activities by focusing on two countries that have been on the Council's agenda for many years, with the goal of strengthening their strategies for emerging from conflict. These countries have been in terrible conflict for many years. These two examples have clearly shown that theory often comes up short when tested against reality in the field. This, however, must not slow our efforts, because we represent an institution whose fundamental role is both to stabilize the emergence from conflict and to prevent the reoccurrence of conflict. It is important to France that the Commission is an essential instrument for conflict prevention and thus for the implementation of the responsibility to protect, a key concept that the Security Council needs to put into practice, as our heads of State or Government decided in September 2005 (see General Assembly resolution 60/1).

Through these two first cases, the Commission has established a process that brings together all of the actors and establishes the basis for a strategy that brings together their efforts.

We would like to welcome the work done to produce the Strategic Framework for peacebuilding in Burundi with a limited number of priorities and commitments in keeping with the crucial issues of peacebuilding in that country. The document was developed in close contact with the Government, but also — and this is an important element — with the political parties, civil society and all parties on the ground. The Commission now needs to advance to the operational stage and guide the implementation of the Strategic Framework. This means supporting necessary actions and projects, following progress and ensuring that the timelines are met, together with making use of locally established mechanisms.

We hope that similar work can rapidly be made on Sierra Leone. We look forward to Ambassador Majoor's return from his visit to Freetown, where a new, democratically elected Government has just begun work.

As my delegation had the occasion to reaffirm last week in the General Assembly, France believes that the Commission should now be hitting its stride. Discussions have already started regarding the possible extension of the agenda to new countries. I hope that all of this reflection will enrich the Council's discussions, as well as those of the other principal organs, and that it reflects an appetite for action, something I view as important.

The issue of expanding the Commission's agenda is indissolubly linked to that of strengthening the Commission. We hope that the Commission will develop its activities and offer the Council its views on new cases, as needs become apparent, and that the Commission will have the capacity to do so. In any event, there is no single solution as the cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone have shown. The Council will continue to examine this issue, and I have no doubt that the Council will enjoy a transparent and effective working relationship with the Chairman of the Commission, Ambassador Takasu.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the purpose of establishing the Peacebuilding Commission goes far beyond establishing a bureaucracy. It is to ensure an appropriate and coordinated response by the international community to post-conflict situations, and to ensure a return to lasting peace. We need to ensure that the Commission continues to be a flexible and responsive mechanism, bringing together all actors and their actions on one single road map.

In September 2005, heads of State or Government committed themselves to help the countries most affected by serious crisis alleviate their extreme poverty. Today, 17 October, the World Day to Overcome Extreme Poverty, we must renew that commitment, as I do on behalf of France.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate. In my country's view, better peacebuilding goes to the heart of the Security Council's work. Peacebuilding is about entrenching peace in countries that have been affected by conflict and about building successful countries. It is about stopping wars from breaking out again. Peacebuilding is the best expression of the interrelationship between security, development, good governance and human rights, which are at the heart of the purposes of the United Nations.

That is why the Peacebuilding Commission was such an important achievement at the 2005 World Summit and why so many hopes are focused on its success. After one year of its substantive work, this is a good moment to reflect on how far we have come and how we can build to meet the challenges we face.

I would first commend the work of our Angolan colleague in his chairmanship of the Peacebuilding Commission in its first year and the contribution made by the Vice-Chairs. I very warmly welcome our Japanese colleague as the new Chairman of the Commission. A great deal of time and effort has been put into establishing the Commission and into its initial work on Burundi and Sierra Leone. We are grateful to Norway and the Netherlands for the excellent leadership that they have played on country-specific work.

I would like to echo others in emphasizing that the true value of the Peacebuilding Commission will be where it can add value to the work of the other institutions of the United Nations. We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission can provide a forum where the international community can help countries address the barriers to peacebuilding and help bring coherence and harmonization to the international community's efforts in the country in question.

We need to continue to develop closer and more focused interaction between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. The Commission's work should not be dominated by process. It must be alive to the challenges faced and provide advice to the Security Council and to other partners on the critical issues that need to be addressed.

I have two modest, practical suggestions for developing those links.

First, we think that there should be regular interaction between the Security Council presidency and the Peacebuilding Commission Chair. That could include discussion of how best to align the work programmes of the two bodies and of how the Commission's capacity for new work — and the formulation of its advice to the Security Council on specific country issues — can best be channelled to the Council.

Secondly, I believe that there is a role for the Security Council itself in requesting advice from the

Peacebuilding Commission on specific issues regarding countries that are on both the Council's agenda and the Commission's agenda — for example, in response to events on the ground. It should be a two-way relationship with a clear division of labour, with the Peacebuilding Commission carrying out its detailed work on peacebuilding issues and providing advice, and with the Security Council taking that advice into account in its work.

An essential part of the Peacebuilding Commission's wider relations involves all the relevant organs of the United Nations: the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, all of which are important. Ambassador Takasu has acknowledged that, and I welcome the emphasis that he has placed on enhancing the relations between the Peacebuilding Commission and the international financial institutions. That too will be key.

Clearly, the Peacebuilding Commission should not remain static; its agenda should evolve. In looking at new countries for the Commission to include on its agenda, it will be important to consider the capacity implications for the Commission and for the Peacebuilding Support Office. In parallel, we would like the Peacebuilding Commission to assess very soon where it believes it can best add value and what experience and resources are required from Commission members and elsewhere.

We also look to the Peacebuilding Support Office to play a more proactive role. For example, it can assist United Nations country teams with peacebuilding analysis or by providing best practices, and it can help to shape the Peacebuilding Commission's activities. In essence, the Peacebuilding Support Office should become the hub for United Nations activities on peacebuilding issues.

During the Peacebuilding Commission's second year, we look forward to the Commission's building on the substantial achievements of its first 12 months, with the support of the Council and in support of the Council, and to its being able to demonstrate real added value to the other institutions of the United Nations.

Mr. Matulay (Slovakia): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on organizing this important debate to consider the inaugural report of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2007/458). I would also

like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Yukio Takasu on his election as Chairman of the Organizational Committee and to wish him every success in his future endeavours. Our thanks go, of course, to his predecessor for the work done.

The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission was set up with high expectations that it would tackle the daunting task of ensuring post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation. With recognition given to the fact that development, peace and security and human rights are mutually reinforcing, the Commission was put in place to offer local, national and international stakeholders in peacebuilding a coordinating forum in which to strengthen their work with one another and with the United Nations.

Indeed, one of the strengths of the Peacebuilding Commission is that it can bring together all key political, military and development stakeholders and that its membership can vary, depending on the country under consideration. In that connection, efforts must be continued to strengthen the modalities and principles of further cooperation, as well as the relationship among the various bodies involved, including the Security Council. The Peacebuilding Commission should also continue to work on how best to relate to civil society.

Backed by a standing Peacebuilding Fund, the Commission is also well equipped to harness international resources and sustained commitment from donor partners, which are necessary to effectively support its growing work in the field. However, the Fund was designed not to finance long-term peacebuilding requirements, but rather to fill funding gaps at the earliest stages of the recovery process.

The third pillar, the Peacebuilding Support Office, is actively supporting the Peacebuilding Commission in its important work, both in the field and at Headquarters. Concerning the ongoing efforts to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Organization — and in that context, I mean restructuring and reform of the Secretariat — we must ensure that the Peacebuilding Support Office is placed within the structure of the Secretariat in a way that allows it to respond effectively to the demands placed on it.

A little more than a year after the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, the reaction to its functioning has been positive overall. My delegation,

too, believes that the Commission is steadily becoming a proactive force within the peacebuilding community.

During the reporting period, the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission reached an agreement on the participation of key institutional donors, fully engaged with the Governments of Burundi and Sierra Leone, and maximized the involvement of parties in the field, including national authorities, United Nations country teams and civil society organizations. The Commission was also able to adopt work plans for Burundi and Sierra Leone. It identified critical priority areas for peace consolidation in each of the two countries and launched processes for the development of integrated peacebuilding strategies.

It is crucial to sustain the political and financial support for those countries in order to help them stay on track for peace. An important part of that effort will be the development of benchmarks and monitoring mechanisms to assess risks to the peace process in the two countries. These are also necessary in order to review country involvement and to monitor the progress of implementation.

The overarching goal of peacebuilding must be to strengthen the capacity of societies to manage conflict without violence. Long-term priorities must include building national institutions, including in the security sector; fostering an all-inclusive political environment; strengthening respect for human rights; and promoting steady economic growth that reduces social tensions.

National ownership of recovery strategies is essential. The complexities of current conflicts and of our peacebuilding efforts call for close coordination with national actors in order to identify their short-, medium- and long-term objectives. What is most important in the work of the Commission is to make tangible progress on the ground.

My delegation has strongly supported the role of the Peacebuilding Commission within the United Nations, which consists of drawing on lessons learned and becoming the repository for advice on critical peacebuilding issues. We welcome the establishment of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, which includes broad participation by all Commission members.

There is no shortage of countries that need help getting on their feet. The Commission could begin

considering the possible addition of a country or countries to its agenda, within manageable limits.

There is real interest among United Nations Members in the Peacebuilding Commission and in what it could do to draw fragile States into the mainstream of democracy and development. It is of great importance that the Commission show results, so that donors and other international and regional actors engaged in the process can have a strong basis for continuing to strengthen their involvement and for providing increased funding. In that context, the Security Council should work hard to make the Commission a success by engaging effectively and constructively in its work.

In conclusion, Slovakia shares the disappointment expressed by the representative of Italy that agreement was not reached on allowing other important United Nations Member States to speak in this debate — in particular, Portugal, on behalf of the presidency of the European Union; El Salvador, as Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and Chair of the Working Group on Lessons Learned; and Jamaica, as coordinator of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium attaches great importance to the Peacebuilding Commission. We believe that, in general, we can welcome the work accomplished during the first year of its existence.

At the outset, my delegation would like to recall the multidimensional nature of the Peacebuilding Commission. It is an organ that is at the crossroads of issues relating to concepts such as security, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. That, moreover, explains its twofold provenance, namely, the Security Council and the General Assembly.

This multidimensionality is reflected in what is the primary task of the Peacebuilding Commission: promoting an integrated approach that takes into account the particular needs of fragile States and potential risks of relapse.

Through such an integrated approach, the Peacebuilding Commission can pave the way for cooperation for classical development by dealing with difficult and critical issues concerned with policy, national reconciliation, drafting a constitution, electoral processes, establishing and strengthening

institutions, security, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, justice, the rule of law and transitional justice, but also, *inter alia*, the return of refugees, access to the media, the employment of young people, or land ownership disputes. It is important for the Peacebuilding Commission to identify in these sectors risks to peacebuilding and means to cope with them.

My delegation welcomes the work that has been done at the Burundi and Sierra Leone country-specific meetings. We welcome the fact that substantive debates have prevailed over procedural ones. On the whole, the various dimensions previously cited have been properly integrated into peacebuilding strategies for these two countries.

It is important, however, to ensure that Integrated Peacebuilding Strategy (IPBS) is not viewed as a framework for supplemental development, alternative to or competitive with existing strategies.

The operational follow-up of Commission recommendations should be done on the basis of benchmarks through monitoring mechanisms that still need to be worked out. The Peacebuilding Commission should not, however, be locked into an excessively rigid mechanism. To remain flexible, it must be able, in real time, to make recommendations correlated with developments in the field, as was fortunately the case for Burundi recently.

My delegation believes that the Peacebuilding Commission is now in a position to take up other countries. Under resolution 1645 (2005), the Security Council has a key role to play, in consultation, naturally, with the Peacebuilding Commission. The Council must not be solely reactive in the choice of countries that could properly benefit from working with the Peacebuilding Commission and consider the specific merits of each file.

It is also important for the Council to spell out, when possible and when necessary, specifically what it expects of the Peacebuilding Commission when it is planning to put a new country file before the Commission. On the other hand, a candidate member must have a good understanding of the nature of the Peacebuilding Commission and what it can legitimately expect from it. In the light of that, we might wonder whether the Peacebuilding Commission needs to draw up an integrated peacebuilding strategy for each country on its agenda. One might imagine for some countries approaches that, to be sure, would be

integrated, but more specifically targeted to those needs and situations where the Peacebuilding Commission could provide clear and specific added value to the efforts made by the countries involved.

The expectations of the Peacebuilding Commission are justifiably high. However, the Commission is not an operational but an advisory body. Its objective is to exert an effective impact on the field by acting so that, through wise advice and views, the various bilateral and multilateral players can assist the Governments involved in coping in the most appropriate manner with the challenges of a fragile peace.

A source of confusion is, and it is our duty to venture to say this, the fact that today we also have a Peacebuilding Fund, and its role is not to replace the conventional donors, but rather to provide financing for critical gaps or to operate as a catalyst fund. In the specific cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone, there is additional confusion because the offices that the Security Council has established in these two countries have mandates with a strong peacebuilding aspect. These offices depend, however, on the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and not on the Peacebuilding Support Office. There is a need to clarify the role that these offices will be playing in the future in the specific context of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Belgium is confident that the work of the Peacebuilding Commission will soon attain cruising speed. In the view of my delegation, it is important for us to have far-reaching goals, but also to be realistic at the same time, and that indeed will be the key to the success of the Commission.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Support Office headed by the Assistant Secretary-General Carolyn McAskie for the work that she had done, and to voice our full confidence in the chairmanship of Ambassador Takasu of Japan and, of course, to thank our colleague from Angola, Ambassador Gaspar Martins, for having set the Peacebuilding Commission on the right path.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you for convening this meeting, Mr. President. First of all, allow me to welcome and thank Ambassador Takasu for his detailed presentation and to reiterate the support of my delegation for him as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Today we are examining both the form and the substance of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in carrying out the mandate given to it by the heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit. As members of the Commission, we have witnessed the arduous work that has been carried out and the fruits of its first year of work. In this context, we feel it is necessary to recognize the work completed by the first Chair of the Organizational Committee, Ambassador Gaspar Martins of Angola, by the Vice-Presidents of the country-specific meetings for Burundi and Sierra Leone, Ambassador Johan Løvald of Norway and Ambassador Frank Majoor of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, as well as the work completed by Vice-Chair of the Group on Lessons Learned, Ambassador Carmen María Gallardo Hernández of El Salvador, and the support of Ms. Carolyn McAskie and her team. We would like to thank each of them for their excellent contribution.

Panama applauds the role of the Commission during the initial stages in developing coordinated, coherent and integrated responses to threats to peacebuilding, especially in the specific cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone. It must be recognized that the Commission also made efforts to ensure the participation of civil society, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Union, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. That contributed positively to the development of the operational criteria for the work of the Commission.

Notwithstanding these achievements, there are many challenges for this body in its second session, in order to ensure that it has a true and lasting impact in the field. Among them, the Commission will have to redefine its working methods with a view to ensuring that they are sustainable. It needs to ensure concrete indicators to measure the implementation of integrated strategies. It also needs to increase the participation of regional and subregional organizations to its work.

Clearly, the Commission could usefully include more countries in its agenda, taking into account its capacities and the lessons learned from the two pilot cases. But it needs to define appropriate criteria for the process, ensuring that whichever country it happens to be is ready to benefit from the work of the Commission. On this point, I would support what was said by the representative of Indonesia, which I thought was particularly clear, precise and pertinent.

The work of the Commission is clearly urgent and should be recognized as such. For that we need to design a communications and information strategy that will ensure that its mission and achievements are known to all.

The responsibility of ensuring the success of the Commission is that of the entire Organization. The Security Council, together with the Commission, needs to decide on criteria and mechanisms so as to avoid duplication and ensure the complementarity of efforts deployed in the countries that are on their agendas. That will be an important step in redoubling our efforts during the second session to ensure that the countries being considered by the Commission achieve peace and sustainable and socially responsible development.

Finally, allow me to make a brief comment on our meeting today. I understand that the main objective of this meeting was to receive a report from the Peacebuilding Commission that would allow the Security Council to carry out its work in the next year. I share the opinion of the representatives of Italy and Slovakia that it would have been preferable to allow all persons directly linked or interested in the work of the Commission to speak to us. I would like to specifically mention the interest in doing so expressed by Ambassador Gallardo Hernández, and the evident interest in doing so expressed by the Non-Aligned Movement and the European Union. I also think that it would have been preferable to hear those people before the members of the Security Council gave their opinions on these issues.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): We too believe that it is important for the Security Council to debate the report of the Peacebuilding Commission. South Africa would have aligned itself with the statement to be made by the distinguished representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and regret that he will not be able to participate in this debate.

We would like to thank the Chairperson of the Commission's first Organizational Committee, Ambassador Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins, the Permanent Representative of Angola. We also wish to extend our gratitude to the contribution made by the Chairs of the country-specific configurations, the Netherlands's Ambassador Frank Majoor, on Sierra Leone, and Norway's Ambassador Johan Løvald, on Burundi. The Working Group on Lessons Learned,

chaired by Ambassador Gallardo Hernández of El Salvador, has also started very important work, from which this Council could have benefited. All of their work has made a difference in the lives of the people of the two African countries, which have just emerged from conflict.

We believe that the Commission is poised for even more success under the leadership of Japan's Ambassador Yukio Takasu, the newly elected Chairperson of the Commission's Organizational Committee.

In its first year, under the excellent leadership of Angola, the Commission was able to operate within a flexible framework, in order to develop working relationships with all its various partners and constituencies. In that context, the Commission adopted provisional rules of procedure, provisional guidelines on the participation of civil society and a country-specific format to consider the cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone. The processes for developing integrated peacebuilding strategies were also launched.

It is important that the Commission continue to be driven by member States. In that context, the Organizational Committee must continue to be the focal point of all the Commission's activities and decisions, and its central role should be strengthened. In other words, we believe that the Organizational Committee of the Commission must be the master of its own procedures.

In the year ahead, under the able leadership of Japan, the Commission must work towards more practical and concrete outcomes from its efforts to promote peace consolidation. The success of the Commission will be judged by its ability to make a real difference on the ground, far away from New York, in places such as Freetown, Bujumbura and beyond.

The ultimate success of the Commission's work lies in the transformation of all of its plans and policies into concrete actions. The main challenge facing the Commission is to maximize its impact on the ground in full alignment and cooperation with the policies and strategies of the national Governments.

On the issue of national ownership, we should ensure that the countries emerging from conflict have full ownership of peacebuilding processes for the benefit of all their people. In that regard, we believe

that the concerned countries must be allowed a genuine national ownership in identifying priorities for peacebuilding. In addition, while there is no argument that the Commission has an advisory role, the Commission should be prepared to listen to the priorities, needs and views of the country under consideration. After all, the primary clients of the Commission are the countries emerging from conflict.

The Peacebuilding Fund was created for the specific purpose of assisting in the facilitation of peacebuilding activities. In this context, the Fund was understood to be a catalyst for attracting much-needed official development assistance and resources, particularly at times when there may be little hope of success towards recovery. It is for that reason that we hope that there will be clarity on the role of the Peacebuilding Fund.

Quick-impact projects and a sufficient injection of predictable resources in a country emerging from conflict is crucial to ensuring stability and development on the ground. For that reason, the invaluable support provided by the donor community to the activities of the Commission needs to be consolidated and enhanced if we are to succeed in achieving peace, security and development, in particular in the early post-conflict stages.

However, it should be made clear that the Peacebuilding Fund cannot and should not replace regular official development assistance. The simple reason is that the Peacebuilding Fund will never raise enough contributions to rival the United Nations Development Programme or even the World Bank. Its role is simply to be a bridge and a catalyst for attracting long-term development aid to countries that have emerged from conflict.

The Commission needs to further strengthen its relationship with relevant organs and institutions, including the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and regional and subregional organizations. The African Union continues to play its role in the peacebuilding field, including through the adoption of a post-conflict reconstruction and development policy. It is for that reason that we hope that in the year ahead the Commission will strengthen its cooperation with the relevant subregional bodies on the African continent. The African Union and regional economic communities, including the African Development

Bank, have a key supportive role to play in peacebuilding efforts. The ability of the Commission to coordinate with those bodies can only improve the lives of people on the ground.

Finally, my delegation has followed with interest the debate about whether so-called criteria should be developed for countries that are referred to the Commission. We believe that the criteria for countries to be included on the Commission agenda are already contained in the resolutions that created that body. Any further so-called criteria will have the undesirable effect of micromanaging the work of the Commission's Organizational Committee. In that context, South Africa strongly supports the request by the Government of Guinea-Bissau to be included on the agenda of the Commission.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): Thank you for holding this important meeting, in the form of an open debate, to consider the first annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission. This constitutes an important opportunity to review the activities of the Commission and to discuss the best ways to support it. I would also like to welcome Ambassador Takasu, the Permanent Representative of Japan and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, and to thank him for his statement. I wish to thank the previous Chair of the Commission, Ambassador Gaspar Martins of Angola, for the effort he put forward during his chairmanship.

During its first year of operation, the Peacebuilding Commission made commendable progress, in terms not only of procedural and organizational matters, such as the adoption of the provisional rules of procedure, but also of systemic issues, such as reaching agreement on the concept paper that provides the appropriate framework for developing an integrated peacebuilding strategy. Of no less importance are the tangible results achieved by the Commission in the context of peacebuilding in each of the two countries under its consideration, Burundi and Sierra Leone, where the Commission covered new ground in its attempt to bring more coherence and impact to the international community's approach to peacebuilding.

The Peacebuilding Commission has proved that its effectiveness in peacebuilding transcends the provision of financial support to post-conflict countries and that it extends to numerous other areas, thereby achieving the vision of an integrated approach to

peacebuilding, on the basis of which the Commission was established. While everyone is aware that the Peacebuilding Commission is not a donor agency, it has proved from the outset that it can be an effective factor in mobilizing financial support from donors.

In addition, the first year since the inception of the peacebuilding mechanism, which emerged from the 2005 World Summit, saw the operationalization of the Peacebuilding Support Office within the Secretariat and the Peacebuilding Fund, which started to receive donations and to provide funding for a number of projects.

There is no doubt that this progress is encouraging; yet, according to the Peacebuilding Commission's report, a number of challenges still face the Commission. In its new session, the Peacebuilding Commission must continue to develop its working methods, strengthen the importance of the integrated peacebuilding strategy, and establish tracking and monitoring mechanisms to measure the success of that strategy. It would be useful to continue the balance between the work of the Organizational Committee and the country-specific configurations, given their complementary nature. On the other hand, the coordination between the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office must continue to be improved.

In order for the Peacebuilding Commission to succeed in achieving its goals, post-conflict countries which are under consideration at regional meetings must have full ownership of the peacebuilding process for the benefit of their peoples. It is essential that the Commission and the Governments of those countries agree on how to move forward on peacebuilding activities.

Under General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005), the mandate of the Commission provides for consultation with civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, since those actors play important roles in post-conflict peacebuilding. Consequently, we welcome the adoption by the Organizational Committee of provisional guidelines that ensure active and productive participation by those players in the process, and we hope that those guidelines continue to be reviewed and improved.

The mandate of the Commission provides for the participation of the stakeholders in the Commission's

work, and in this context we commend the Organizational Committee's decision to extend permanent invitations to institutional donors to participate in all Peacebuilding Commission meetings.

The 2005 World Summit decided to establish the Peacebuilding Commission as a joint advisory body reporting to both the General Assembly and the Security Council. Accordingly, the Commission must operate within the mandate given by those two bodies. The recent meeting of the General Assembly that considered the Peacebuilding Commission's annual report demonstrated clearly the close attention given by the Assembly to the work of the Commission. In general, close coordination must exist between the Commission and the main bodies and organs of the United Nations, including the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

The Peacebuilding Commission, having scored a preliminary success with the first two countries under its consideration, it is only natural that we should ensure that more countries benefit from its services in the course of the coming stages of its work. In considering candidate countries, due consideration must be given to their varied conditions and, therefore, to the most appropriate manner of administering the peacebuilding process. Consideration must also be given to how much the candidate country can benefit from being included in the Commission's agenda.

Finally, we commend the effective efforts of Ambassador Gaspar Martins, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission during its first session, and the two Vice-Chairs and the Chairs of the two country-specific configurations. We wish also to commend the Peacebuilding Support Office, headed by Assistant Secretary-General McAskie, and the great work that the office has undertaken in implementing its responsibilities.

Ms. Wolcott (United States): The United States believes strongly in the importance of a successful United Nations Peacebuilding Commission. We appreciate the report presented today by Ambassador Takasu.

Preventing a reversion to violence in post-conflict States through sustainable peacebuilding is in the interest of all members of the international community. We applaud the accomplishments of the Peacebuilding Commission during the difficult early days of

establishing a new institution. These are the first steps towards achieving coordinated peacebuilding structures that produce tangible and sustainable results. We view the Peacebuilding Commission as, potentially, a key part of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

The Peacebuilding Commission's efforts at integrated peacebuilding strategies for the first countries under the Peacebuilding Commission's review, Sierra Leone and Burundi, are a valuable exercise in promoting better dialogue among Governments, civil society representatives, the international community and other relevant actors. We look forward to seeing these strategies translated into concrete programmes and institutions that serve the people of Burundi and Sierra Leone and form the foundation for healthy, peaceful societies in these States.

Tracking and monitoring mechanisms for integrated peacebuilding in countries under Peacebuilding Commission review can be helpful in identifying gaps with precision and allowing for the more effective marshalling of resources for the purpose of creating sustainable peace.

We would support formation of a roster of experts who, in coordination with the efforts of other related offices in the United Nations system could assist the Peacebuilding Commission by drawing on existing initiatives. Our own peacebuilding experts in the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization stand ready to work with the Peacebuilding Commission.

The United States has still not contributed to the Peacebuilding Fund, but we are in the process of assessing the Fund's performance, as seen in its first year of operation. We urge the Secretary-General to consider commissioning an independent evaluation of the Fund. We are particularly interested in the ultimate sustainability of the initial projects funded by the Fund, given that it is meant to have a catalytic effect in bringing about sustained support.

We see the Peacebuilding Commission as having a unique niche in the United Nations system, the focal point for garnering long-term political will from the international community and coordinating long-term efforts to ensure sustainable peacebuilding.

We would like to see the role of the Peacebuilding Commission strengthened in the United

Nations system. We look forward to stronger engagement by the Peacebuilding Commission with the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

We would like to highlight our appreciation for the work of the Peacebuilding Commission's Working Group on Lessons Learned, which is chaired by El Salvador and in which the experiences of post-conflict countries are drawn upon to accumulate best peacebuilding practices.

Let me also add my country's thanks, as well as my own, for the work of Angola, the Netherlands and Norway on the Peacebuilding Commission this past year.

The United States looks forward to discussion of the Peacebuilding Commission's future agenda and capacity to take on new countries. At this early stage of the Peacebuilding Commission's development, we want to be sure that the Commission does not overextend itself and that, instead, it has solid successes, with a realistic agenda derived from judicious consideration of the many post-conflict countries that could benefit from the Commission's review. As we gradually build up the experience and capacity of the Peacebuilding Commission, we should consider how it can assist countries with United Nations peacekeeping missions that are winding down, to ensure that their peacebuilding phase is sustained and successful.

In addition, we look forward to considering new modes for the engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission that are tailored to the needs of particular countries and to allow more efficient use of the Commission's resources.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Ghana.

My delegation wishes to thank Ambassador Yukio Takasu, Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, for his introduction of the first annual report (S/2007/458) of the Peacebuilding Commission. I also wish to commend Ambassador Gaspar Martins of Angola for his pioneering role — supported by the Peacebuilding Support Office, led by Assistant Secretary-General Carolyn McAskie — as the first Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The annual report highlights some of the progress made by, and the challenges confronting, the Peacebuilding Commission. Notable among the Commission's achievements has been its ongoing task of assisting the two countries currently on its agenda, namely, Burundi and Sierra Leone, to develop and implement peacebuilding strategies based on priorities identified in the light of the principle of national ownership. Some challenges have also been spelled out in the annual report, as well as in statements we have heard from various delegations this morning, which should merit the Council's due consideration.

One year after it was established, a clear consensus has yet to emerge about aspects of the Peacebuilding Commission's conceptual design, operational methods and relationship with other United Nations bodies and non-United Nations entities, as well as between the Commission's own configurations. The recent request by Guinea-Bissau to be placed by the Security Council on the agenda of the Commission, which Ghana supports, has brought some of those issues into sharp focus.

Questions have been asked as to how many countries should be on the Commission's agenda at any given time, and what eligibility criteria should be used; whether, besides the Security Council, other organs, such as the Economic and Social Council, that deal with the socio-economic recovery and development of post-conflict countries may refer countries to the Peacebuilding Commission for inclusion in its agenda; and whether the Commission, which was essentially established as an intergovernmental advisory body, may offer advice to all relevant countries on the Council's agenda that are making the transition from war to peace, in particular those at the risk of relapsing into a cycle of violence.

Any meaningful attempt to answer those and other questions exercising the minds of many must take due cognizance of the circumstances leading to the adoption, on 20 December 2005, of concurrent resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, namely, resolutions 60/180 and 1645 (2005). Those resolutions led to the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission as a hybrid subsidiary body of both organs. The Commission is unique, and the first institutional mechanism of the United Nations of its kind. The Commission, together with the

Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office, constitutes the peacebuilding architecture constructed in our collective quest to reform the United Nations.

Following the lessons learned from the experience of many countries that relapsed into conflict a few short years after peace agreements were signed, the Peacebuilding Commission was designed to fill an institutional gap within the United Nations by addressing the deficit in international attention on countries in post-conflict situations. It was also intended to help bridge the financial and other resource gaps by playing an advocacy and catalytic role in mobilizing national and international resources to sustain peace. To that end, the Commission must become more proactive in mobilizing the support of international financial institutions and other donors to enable the Peacebuilding Fund to close the gap between pledges and commitment. The Commission must also be more proactive in engaging civil society to enhance the prospects of peacebuilding initiatives at the local and community levels.

The Peacebuilding Commission itself must be adequately resourced to strengthen its capacity to accept more countries on its agenda. In that regard, further improvements in its working methods, taking into account lessons learned in its first year of operation, may be necessary. Who qualifies to be on the agenda of the Commission should be determined by need and reality. Ghana looks forward to working together with other members of the Security Council to achieve the necessary consensus on the request by Guinea-Bissau to be placed on the Commission's agenda sooner rather later. But the door should not be closed to other deserving countries, whether they have peacekeeping operations or not, because peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations should not necessarily be viewed as mutually exclusive, but rather as mutually reinforcing.

In conclusion, the ultimate purpose of the Peacebuilding Commission is to help national and transitional authorities to rebuild institutions of democratic accountability and good governance that will be capable of sustaining peace long after external peacemakers and peacekeepers have left, in order to avert a relapse into violence. National ownership should remain the core principle of peacebuilding, focusing on rebuilding national capacity to sustain peace.

To be sustainable, peacebuilding efforts must deal with the root causes of conflict by tackling poverty, injustice and inequitable development, the promotion of a culture of respect for the rule of law and human rights, and adherence to the highest standards of good governance and good citizenship. The African Union's Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework, which places emphasis on tackling root causes of conflict, may be relevant in the Commission's effort to mobilize regional support for its mandate.

Finally, Ghana remains committed to the objectives of the Peacebuilding Commission, and calls on the international community to approach the challenges of peacebuilding in a coordinated, integrated, flexible and efficient manner in order that post-conflict countries will not relapse, while also ensuring that the peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations, erected through difficult negotiations and compromises, does not collapse.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. Majoor (Netherlands): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to join with the Security Council at this important moment as it debates the first annual report (S/2007/458) of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The first year of the Commission's operation has, in many respects, been a challenging one. As Ambassador Takasu of Japan, the recently elected Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, said earlier in this meeting, the Peacebuilding Commission has had a full agenda, centred on the first two countries to be considered by that newly established body, namely, Burundi and Sierra Leone. Allow me, in my capacity as Chair of the country-specific meetings on Sierra Leone, to focus in particular on the work that has been undertaken within that context, and to add some remarks of a more general nature.

I have just returned from a mission to Sierra Leone, regarding which I intend to give members of the Peacebuilding Commission a full briefing later this week. I shall gladly brief the Council in detail at a later stage, if its members so wish. Allow me to highlight only a few aspects.

My mission was intended to secure the continued commitment of the newly elected Government of Sierra Leone with regard to the country-specific work that has been undertaken in the Peacebuilding Commission. That has to do in particular with the four priorities for peacebuilding that were identified at the end of 2006, which have guided our work since. They are: justice and security sector reform; good governance and the consolidation of democracy; the empowerment and employment of young people; and capacity building. In that context, I should also note the recognized relevance of gender equality and human rights as cross-cutting issues in terms of building and sustaining peace in Sierra Leone, as well as the continued need for urgent improvement of the infrastructure in Sierra Leone, in particular for the supply of energy. The newly elected President of Sierra Leone, Ernest Koroma, has endorsed those priorities, which were also reflected in his acceptance speech delivered to Parliament on 5 October 2007.

I have equally sought and secured the new Government's commitment to the finalization of the draft framework for cooperation that was drafted in the course of 2007. The framework, which is to guide the relationship between the Peacebuilding Commission and Sierra Leone, is intended as a means to obtain engagements by all actors — the Government as well as the members of the Commission and other relevant parties — under the four priority areas that I have mentioned. In cooperation with the Sierra Leone Government, which is leading the process, we intend to finalize the framework by the end of this year.

The pace of progress made within the Peacebuilding Commission in its first year in relation to Sierra Leone was greatly determined by the presidential and parliamentary elections in the country, which took place over the past two months. Following a request by the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission monitored the Sierra Leone election process and issued a declaration that was subsequently transmitted to this Council.

The elections that have taken place in Sierra Leone, which have been generally peaceful and have seen a high voter turn-out, can be labelled as a landmark in the democratic process in the country. That holds true for the preparation of the elections, the elections themselves, and the ongoing transition process. They have proved that the people of Sierra Leone are investing their hopes in a democratic future

in which all segments of the population can make their voices heard.

While that is a highly important achievement in a country that was left ravaged by war some five years ago, crucial challenges to sustainable peace remain in the areas that I have mentioned. Moreover, the expectations of the people of Sierra Leone are high. Both continue to justify the active involvement of the Peacebuilding Commission, together with the Sierra Leone Government — notably, also in view of the local elections next year, which will require strengthened local institutions. The Peacebuilding Commission will also continue to have a critical role in strengthening the dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone and the international community.

The Peacebuilding Commission has had to develop its work programme without pre-established models. It was given and has taken the opportunity to define its activities in relation to the countries on its agenda in function of their needs and of the practical possibilities for engagement. That has led to the practice of holding regular meetings of the Commission in its country-specific formats that have proved highly effective. The regular use of video-link technology has enabled a close, real-time dialogue between the Peacebuilding Commission in New York and all actors in-country: the Government, non-governmental organizations, civil society and the local donor community.

More importantly, the working procedures of the Peacebuilding Commission have led to a process that was and is fully owned by the Government of Sierra Leone and that has benefited from the informed inputs of many actors, notably civil society representatives and non-governmental organizations. In that context, I would also like to mention the important contributions of the Peacebuilding Support Office and the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone to our work.

At present, we have before us a draft cooperation framework that, once further refined, will provide a strong basis for concrete commitment by all based on mutual accountability and with a mechanism for their regular monitoring and review. I am confident that by proceeding on the current track, the Peacebuilding Commission will be able to make a significant contribution to peacebuilding in Sierra Leone.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Løvold (Norway): Since the debate on peacebuilding that the Security Council had in January, the Peacebuilding Commission has made considerable progress, as pointed out in its annual report, including in its Burundi-specific configuration, which I have the pleasure of chairing.

Bearing in mind the Security Council's original request for advice on Burundi, I would like to focus my intervention on the progress made and the challenges ahead in the Peacebuilding Commission's work on Burundi.

First, I should like to emphasize the importance of national ownership and commend the Government and people of Burundi for their active and constructive cooperation in peace consolidation. Based on that cooperation, the Peacebuilding Commission has been able to identify priorities for peacebuilding and how to address them, not least through the development of the Strategic Framework for peacebuilding in Burundi, which was a significant achievement. The consultative process in Burundi during the development of the Strategic Framework was appreciated, and we encourage continued and open dialogue between all stakeholders in the country.

Secondly, while we have focused so far on peacebuilding priorities, we are now, in this second year of work, shifting our focus to how to deal with those priorities. We are now in the process of setting up a monitoring and tracking mechanism for the Strategic Framework. In other words, we are moving from identification to implementation. We hope to finalize work on the mechanism in the near future. It will be crucial in our efforts to make sure that consolidation of peace actually happens. Again, the Government carries a special responsibility, but so do other stakeholders. Resource mobilization will be a crucial element in that regard. The present precarious budgetary situation in Burundi bears strong testimony to that.

Thirdly, also in the case of Burundi, there is no development without security and no security without development. As regards the security situation, I wish to draw the Council's attention to the conclusions and recommendations on peacebuilding in Burundi forwarded to the President of the Security Council in my letter dated 20 September 2007. The conclusions and recommendations addressed some of the key challenges facing the country at this time, including the implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire

Agreement between the Government of Burundi and the Palipehutu-Forces Nationales de Libération (Palipehutu-FNL). A specific recommendation was given to the Government of Burundi to continue to explore all ways to resolve its differences with the leaders of the Palipehutu-FNL. A specific recommendation was also given to the Palipehutu-FNL to resume promptly, without condition, its participation in the work of the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and constructively to re-engage with the Government with a view to resolving differences. This is an issue that is still a matter of concern.

I recall that the Peacebuilding Commission, in its recommendation to the Security Council, asked the Council to continue to closely monitor the situation in Burundi, in particular with respect to the effective implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement and to consider, if necessary, undertaking appropriate action with a view to the effective implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement by the set deadline.

The regional initiative and the South African facilitator are working actively to facilitate dialogue among the parties and to bring the Palipehutu-FNL back to the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. Their efforts need our support. I would therefore wish to reiterate the call on the Security Council to address that issue and to take concrete measures, as it might see fit, with a view to contributing to the resolution of that outstanding issue.

The importance of the resolution of the issue cannot be emphasized enough. The people of Burundi deserve peace so that other pressing issues in terms of political stabilization and economic development can be achieved. The Security Council's concrete contribution to the achievement of that objective would be timely and invaluable.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Pemagbi (Sierra Leone): Sierra Leone congratulates you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of October 2007. We assure you, and the Council, of our full and unwavering support.

We deeply appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the discussion of the first report of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2007/458) for the

second time in two weeks. The prominence that has been given to the report by two principal organs of the United Nations — the Security Council and the General Assembly — is an indication of the significance they attach to the Peacebuilding Commission and its partner, the Peacebuilding Fund.

We were compelled by our own painful experience with conflict to play an active role in the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission. As Council members know, we had the fortune of becoming one of the two countries for the Commission's first country-specific interventions. Thus, we have witnessed with unflagging interest the birth and growth of the Peacebuilding Commission. The report before us is an account of how that birth and growth took place, of the challenges the Commission has had to conquer and of challenges that are yet to be conquered.

We welcome and appreciate the report. Now we have a torch, in the form of the report, to show us the way into the future. In spite of the Commission's teething problems, most of which were not totally unexpected, all of us should be proud of the achievements of the Peacebuilding Commission during its short period of existence. My delegation would like to thank all those whose efforts put the Commission on the path we envisaged at the conceptual stage, particularly the Commission itself, the first Chairman, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Chairs of the country-specific configurations.

Let me pay a special tribute to the Chair for Sierra Leone, Ambassador Frank Majoor, for his devotion to Sierra Leone. Of course, we thank the Commission for selecting Sierra Leone as one of the two countries for its initial operation.

In Sierra Leone, as in many other places that have been afflicted with violent and devastating conflict, the road to peace has not been altogether smooth. But with tolerance, understanding and the overriding need to reconcile and move forward for the general good, even the pain, the mud and thorns we have travelled through for peace have been the greatest of healers. Today, we can reflect with pride on the two presidential and parliamentary elections and the one local government election we have had since the war formally ended in 2002. These represent giant strides in our peace and democratization processes and a solid foundation for sustainable peace.

The recent elections, in particular, speak eloquently of our political maturity and determination to achieve lasting stability. Again, we thank the United Nations and all other multilateral and bilateral partners of Sierra Leone for their support.

We are aware that this support comes with the responsibility to make sure that the people of Sierra Leone enjoy, in tangible terms, the benefits of peace, democracy and human rights, and, in particular, the realization of the promise of the Peacebuilding Commission. That is why our new President both in his maiden speech to parliament and during the recent visit of Ambassador Majoor, declared his commitment to the cooperation of his Government with the United Nations in general and with the Peacebuilding Commission in particular.

As a demonstration of our readiness to discharge our responsibility, let me make the following observations and recommendations. First, work on the framework document on cooperation between Sierra Leone and the Peacebuilding Commission was slowed down by the elections. Now that the elections are over, we should try as expeditiously as possible to conclude it so that this issue does not stand in the way of progress in the implementation of the Sierra Leone programme.

Secondly, country ownership of the Peacebuilding Commission both in principle and in practical terms, should be the foundation for the operations of the Commission.

Thirdly, resource mobilization is one of the responsibilities of the Commission. That should now be brought to the fore of its activities, including, possibly, through a pledging conference with all our partners fully involved. Given very weak — and in some cases non-existent — institutions, owing partly to a scarcity of appropriately trained and experienced personnel, the Peacebuilding Commission may want to consider introducing a scheme for experience transfer to needy countries that are within its purview. The programme, as a critically urgent gap-closer in the recovery process, should be flexible, adaptable and in harmony with those already in place.

Fourthly, in the light of the fluid nature of conflict in the West African subregion, a carefully coordinated regional approach, in particular within the Mano River Union, will be an investment worth considering by the Commission.

Lastly, the institution of a strong monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the programmes in operation should be considered.

The Commission might also consider the question of working relationships among the Commission, the Security Council and the General Assembly, while recognizing their respective responsibilities and functions under the Charter.

We acknowledge that the Commission shall request advice from the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council or the General Assembly. In our view, there is also need for the Commission to start thinking of ways in which it can assist the Security Council by providing relevant advice, for instance in the establishment of new United Nations post-conflict integrated offices, or even in developing peacekeeping mandates.

Since the Commission was established jointly by the General Assembly and the Security Council, perhaps at the end of this first year of the Commission's work the Council itself may wish to come up with general proposals to address some of the challenges outlined in the Commission's report.

In conclusion, let me assure the Security Council that we are prepared and ready to share with the rest of the world what I prefer to call the Sierra Leone experience, in the days of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone and now in the days of the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone and the Peacebuilding Commission. For now, that is perhaps all that we can give to the world for its support. As intangible as what we have to offer may seem at the moment, I am sure that future generations may one day say, yes, our predecessors invested so much for peace and stability in Sierra Leone, but the result of the experiment has made our work easier and saved the world lives and billions of dollars.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Burundi.

Mr. Ntakirutimana (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, at the outset I wish on behalf of my delegation to extend to you our sincere gratitude for having invited us to this meeting. I wish also to thank the delegation of Angola which courageously, farsightedly and wisely guided the first difficult year of the Peacebuilding Commission.

My delegation also wishes to offer encouragement to the delegation of Japan, which has just taken over the chairmanship of the Commission. Nor can we forget to thank in particular the Norwegian delegation, which has been with us since our country became a beneficiary of the attention of the Commission. We also wish to thank the Peacebuilding Support Office and the delegations of El Salvador and the Netherlands for their work in launching the activities of the Commission and attaining the first milestones.

When the Peacebuilding Commission was created, Burundi was plunged into enormous disarray. Burundi had experienced 40 years of bad governance. It had just experienced more than 10 years of a fratricidal war, of which it bore the scars. There were new institutions that had just been created and which were supposed to be functioning: there was a new general assembly, a new senate, a new army and a new national police, to mention only a few. In a word, the entire country had to be reborn, grow, stabilize and develop.

With the Peacebuilding Commission, we have now come to the end of a year of useful, laborious and good work. Together, over the past year, we have succeeded, as we see it, in holding 4 major gatherings.

First, there was the matter of getting to know Burundi. Several delegations came from Bujumbura to New York to participate in the meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission. Delegations also went from New York to Bujumbura — to the field — to see for themselves the reality of the situation there.

Secondly, there was the identification of priorities and the challenges facing my Government.

Thirdly, there was the development of the Strategic Framework. Today we are in the process of finalizing the follow-up mechanism for the implementation of the Strategic Framework.

Fourthly, for my delegation, there was the organization — the success even — from 24 to 25 May, of the round table of development partners and donors.

Today, my country is facing 3 essential challenges. First, those projects identified by the Commission are currently being implemented. Twelve projects are in the process of becoming operational. It

would be our hope that the Commission would remain focused on the success of these projects. We do not wish to see their failure. We do not want to see them fail to achieve a conclusion.

Secondly, we wish to see complete and final peace on the territory of Burundi. We would hope that the Security Council will firmly and clearly support the efforts of the South African facilitators in the search for final peace in Burundi. The regional initiative put forward by Uganda is doing its best and deserves specific and concrete backing from the Security Council. We should like to reassure the Council that the Government of Burundi has no kind of hidden agenda that might in any way delay or jeopardize the path to peace. The fighters of the Forces nationales de libération — Parti Libération du Peuple Hutu (FNL-PALIPHEUTU) are our brothers, our neighbours and are people from our own families, and we are ready to welcome them.

The goodwill of the Government of Burundi shows that more than 1,400 deserters from the FNL-PALIPHEUTU movement are now in fact saying that they want to see the implementation of the agreement signed with the leadership of their movement. They are deserting their movement and they are coming to seek protection from Governmental forces. Here I would like to request the Council's support in ensuring that they are fed so as to avoid having them destroy the villages in which they are now gathered.

Thirdly, peace without bread can go nowhere; we also wish to have bread. During the round table in May of 2007 — a successful round table — various budgetary pledges were made by development partners present in Bujumbura. Today, as in the past, Burundi notes with the deepest regret, that few partners have in fact kept their pledges. My delegation would like here to see the Security Council and the Commission get involved in pooling their efforts to ensure that promises become realities.

I would like to suggest four ideas for the improvement of the Commission's future activities.

First, there is the need to consider the principle of national involvement as the cornerstone that must guide all the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Secondly, the Peacebuilding Commission must continue to work in a transparent, flexible and inclusive manner.

Thirdly, the Commission must continue to work in close cooperation with the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the international financial institutions, as well as regional organizations.

Fourthly, dialogue should be continued with all of the interested players: the donor countries, the recipient countries and the United Nations system as a whole.

Burundi's success as it moves toward the final achievement of peace will also be a success for the Security Council and for the Commission. If we succeed, we shall succeed together; if we fail, we will fail together. My Government once again reiterates to the Commission what it has already said often, namely, that we hope to see the Commission and the Security Council one day tell us that we have succeeded in Burundi.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of El Salvador, in which she requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mrs. Gallardo Hernández (El Salvador) took the seat reserved for her at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of El Salvador.

Mrs. Gallardo Hernández (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate the President for having convened this open debate in the Security Council on the Peacebuilding Commission report (S/2007/458) and to allow me to participate.

We would like to recognize the leadership of the Permanent Representative of Angola, Ambassador Gaspar Martins, and we welcome the Ambassador from Japan, Mr. Takasu, and assure him of our full support.

A bit more than 1 year has passed now since the Peacebuilding Commission was established within the

process of the reform of the United Nations. Expectations at that time were multiple and different; this was reflected in the initial meetings of the Commission because it was a new body. It meant that member States had to define and agree on the functions, both of the Peacebuilding Support Office, as well as the Peacebuilding Fund committee. We needed to plan strategically and consistently to see how we were to work, including clear monitoring procedures for activities that the Commission was to carry out on the ground.

However, throughout this first year, we have looked at the achievements with optimism, even though we are aware of the multiple challenges that our Commission still faces.

El Salvador's re-election as Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and our role as Chair of the Working Group on Lessons Learned mean that, as a country, we are intensely committed to our mission.

Created to fill a gap in the United Nations system and to facilitate the transition of post-conflict processes from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, our Commission, by virtue of its composition, will give added value to the assistance that the United Nations will henceforth have to provide to countries that decide to lay down weapons and settle their disputes through dialogue and agreement, with a view to establishing a national development plan.

Undoubtedly, the presence of donor countries, which in the past few years have contributed economic, technical and financial cooperation in various countries, is complemented by the presence of countries such as El Salvador. Having overcome internal violence, we in those countries wish to help, on the basis of our experiences, to guide possible decisions or recommendations that the Peacebuilding Commission could make in the countries under consideration — currently, Sierra Leone and Burundi.

The first report of the Peacebuilding Commission, submitted at the end of this year (S/2007/458), reflects some progress and achievements, while at the same time indicating necessary tasks that have yet to be carried out, particularly on the ground. Indeed, it is on the ground where the Commission's concrete actions should take place, because that is where the dividends of peace trickle down. In our view, the presence of Commission members on the ground through programme visits is

necessary for the analysis and the strategies that the Commission decides upon.

Our challenge is to intensify the coordination and communication between the Commission and the Security Council, including the possibility of presenting to the Council — if the Council desires them — the Commission's opinions on subjects of common interest. We also consider it appropriate to formulate concrete strategies, as we did in the cases of Burundi and Sierra Leone, through the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding, because that is an added value and does not duplicate efforts.

The international community is awaiting a tangible contribution from the Peacebuilding Commission and — why not say it? — some practical recommendations in specific areas and contexts. From that perspective, the Working Group on Lessons Learned, which El Salvador has the honour to chair, has endeavoured to analyse and assemble concrete experiences through various processes so as to accumulate an inventory of lessons learned by the United Nations system and the international community, for when weapons are laid down, there is an imperative need for new coexistence and integration into a shared national development project.

While each peacebuilding process has its own characteristics, and its success certainly depends on the political will of national actors, the implementation of lessons learned should benefit the countries under consideration. Therefore, let us not forget to build a historical memory that will contribute in the future to more effective United Nations participation in peacebuilding activities.

The modality adopted by the Working Group on Lessons Learned — which connects actors on the ground with Commission members through videoconferences — reflects the openness and flexibility that our work should have. Indeed, it is an open Group in which all United Nations Member States are welcome to make a concrete contribution that can benefit the quest for lasting solutions on the ground in the countries under consideration.

On the basis of our experience, we believe that when a country emerges from armed conflict, it is essential to bring the parties together in order to identify short- and medium-term priorities and to act on that basis. At that time, let us not forget, needs are many and national capacity is sometimes limited.

However, there are certain aspects that, if not urgently addressed, can set back and jeopardize political agreements reached by national actors — such as, to mention only a few, opportunities to reintegrate and employ former combatants and young people, and reform of the security sector. Those are among the issues that the Working Group on Lessons Learned has identified and analysed.

From the outset, El Salvador has expressed its firm belief that the Peacebuilding Commission should not be considered just a forum for financial cooperation or a mediator between donors and recipient countries. We believe it is important that Commission members be aware of areas or programmes that are seeking financing through the Peacebuilding Fund. While it is important to listen to national authorities when they identify their priorities, the way in which those priorities are financed — as we have seen in the Working Group on Lessons Learned — can be far more successful if experiences in other processes are taken into account.

The reality of today's world demonstrates that no region is spared from the possibility of conflict. That is why we hope that, in the future, the Peacebuilding Commission will have to take into account a certain geographic balance in terms of the countries under consideration.

Finally, let me add that the inclusion of a country in the Commission's agenda, as well as a country's removal from it, should be agreed with the national authorities. At the same time, the inclusion of new countries should be decided with the input, or at least the knowledge, of the Commission members.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.



Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5762nd meeting

Friday, 19 October 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Christian	(Ghana)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Pérez
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnston
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad

Agenda

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in that country (S/2007/576)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in that country (S/2007/576)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Guinea-Bissau, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Cabral (Guinea-Bissau) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/576, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in that country.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council, recalling its previous statements on Guinea-Bissau, and having considered the latest report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2007/576), reaffirms its support for the continuing efforts to consolidate peace in that country.

"The Security Council notes with deep concern the threat posed by drug and human trafficking which can undermine the important gains made with respect to rule of law and to democratic and transparent governance. The Council further notes that the danger posed by drug trafficking in Guinea-Bissau could have negative implications towards the region as well as other regions.

"The Security Council is especially concerned over the security and safety of Bissau-Guinean officials involved in combating drug trafficking and organized crime. The Security Council therefore calls upon the Government with appropriate support from the international community to take concerted action to safeguard the safety and security of those officials who are involved in combating these activities.

"The Security Council welcomes the decision by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to convene later this year a regional conference on combating drug trafficking, aimed at developing a regional plan of action to deal with this challenge. The Security Council calls for urgent consideration of how the United Nations system might improve its support for Guinea-Bissau's fight against international drug trafficking and organized crime. The Security Council recognizes the importance of containing and reversing the threat of drug trafficking to the peace consolidation process in Guinea-Bissau. The Security Council further recognizes in particular the important role of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The Council requests the Secretary-General to report on this matter as soon as practicable. The Council further welcomes the initiative to hold an international conference in Lisbon, Portugal on drug trafficking in Guinea-Bissau in December 2007.

"The Security Council also expresses its concern with the fragility of the democratization process in Guinea-Bissau as well as persistent economic and social crisis.

"The Security Council welcomes the scheduled convening of legislative elections in 2008 and calls on all segments of Bissau-Guinean society to ensure that the elections take place in a

peaceful and orderly fashion. The Council further appeals to the international community to provide the necessary logistical and technical support to ensure the effective and timely organization of the polls.

"The Security Council further welcomes the improved dialogue between the Government of Guinea-Bissau and the Bretton Wood institutions and urges the Government to continue to implement its commitments in the areas of fiscal responsibility, reforms of the justice sector and good governance. The Council also welcomes the assistance provided to Guinea-Bissau by bilateral and multilateral partners, in particular the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union and the World Bank, and encourages their enhanced constructive involvement in the country.

"The Security Council encourages the authorities of Guinea-Bissau to carry out their commitment concerning security sector reform. The Council also takes note of the announcement made by the European Union and ECOWAS to make resources available in support of security sector reform.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of a holistic approach in resolving the complex and multidimensional situation facing Guinea-Bissau and requests the Secretary-General to present proposals on how best the United Nations could provide effective assistance in an integrated and holistic manner to national efforts in order to contribute to the sustainable stabilization of Guinea-Bissau.

"The Security Council takes note of the letter from the Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau

requesting that Guinea-Bissau be placed on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission and expresses its intent to consider the request as a matter of priority.

"The Security Council reaffirms that peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau are critical for peace and security in the West African subregion. The Council recognizes the importance of the regional dimension in the resolution of the problems faced by Guinea-Bissau and in this regard welcomes the role being played by the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) in the peacebuilding process in Guinea-Bissau.

"The Security Council recognizes and commends the important role played by the Representative of the Secretary-General and the staff of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS), as well as the United Nations country team, towards helping consolidate peace, democracy and the rule of law, and expresses its appreciation for the activities.

"The Security Council will keep the situation in Guinea-Bissau under active review."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2007/38.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.



Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5763rd meeting

Friday, 19 October 2007, 10.25 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Christian	(Ghana)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Biabaroh-Iboro
	France	Mr. Ripert
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . .	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Mr. Khalilzad

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1770 (2007) (S/2007/608)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1770 (2007) (S/2007/608)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Iraq in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/608, containing the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1770 (2007).

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and by Mr. Zalmay Khalilzad, representative of the United States, on behalf of the Multinational Force.

I now give the floor to Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

Mr. Pascoe: Before you, Mr. President, is the first report issued pursuant to resolution 1770 (2007), and it reflects the expanded nature of the new mandate and preparations made by the United Nations for that role. The report before you also illustrates the magnitude of the challenges facing Iraq and the efforts of the Government of Iraq, neighbouring countries, the United Nations and the wider international community to address them.

Iraq is faced today with an exceptionally complex series of overlapping sectarian, political and ethnic conflicts that have proved beyond the capacity of any one actor or policy initiative to resolve. Violence aimed at civilian populations and members of the Government continues to impede efforts to establish stability in the country and makes national dialogue challenging. Increasing levels of displacement add to an already alarming humanitarian crisis. Current conditions, therefore, greatly impact the ability of the United Nations to perform its duties and provide assistance to those in need.

However, as the Secretary-General noted in his report, there is an opportunity today that should not be missed. September witnessed the lowest number of Iraqi casualties for the year. The ceasefire declared by the Mahdi Army, the Sunni insurgent alliance against Al-Qaida, the pact reached by the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council and the Sadrists and the efforts by the Multinational Force in Iraq and the Iraqi security forces all appear to be contributing to this effect. These events represent a political opportunity to transform military-political development into a basis for achieving broad national reconciliation.

With the adoption of resolution 1770 (2007), the Council recognizes the need for an enhanced effort to assist the people and the leadership of Iraq. In particular, the new mandate creates the basis for broader United Nations efforts in advancing national dialogue, and the Secretary-General's new Special Representative will immediately explore possibilities when he reaches Iraq in two weeks.

While it has proven difficult to strike a mutually acceptable balance between the competing claims on the basic issues of Iraq's future amid ongoing violence, mistrust and bitter memories, Iraqi leaders must move beyond rhetoric and mere statements of intent. The challenge now is to make progress on the constitutional review and major legislation which is central to the

process of reconciliation, such as that relating to oil and the law to reform de-Baathification.

To truly make a difference on the ground, however, these developments will need to form part of, and contribute to, a wider political reconciliation process in Iraq. This is primarily the responsibility of the Iraqi Government, and the United Nations stands ready to assist to that end. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) also remains committed to supporting Iraqi preparations for future electoral events by working to build the capacity of the Independent High Electoral Commission and advising on key electoral legislation.

Resolution 1770 (2007) envisions a strengthened United Nations role in assisting the Government of Iraq in promoting the constructive engagement of regional countries, and the high-level meeting on Iraq co-hosted by the Secretary-General and Prime Minister al-Maliki on 22 September reinforced support for the United Nations role in this area.

Iraq's neighbouring countries, and others in the region, remain vital for the stability of Iraq. While competing views and national interests exist, all of Iraq's neighbours have an interest in limiting the deterioration of the situation in Iraq, and no one wishes to see instability engulf the region or spread to their country. There is a need for neighbouring countries to embrace a responsible and measured approach to Iraq's challenges. As the report highlights, the dialogue among Iraq's neighbours and other key international actors initiated at Sharm el-Sheikh is encouraging. The three working groups have convened and have discussed concrete issues. The United Nations has offered to support a mechanism to ensure adequate follow-up on the expanded meetings of Iraq's neighbours and the working groups. It is our hope that the next expanded meeting of Iraq's neighbours, to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, in early November 2007, will address this matter in a constructive manner.

The high-level meeting on 22 September also highlighted progress made in the implementation of the International Compact with Iraq and in other aspects of development and reconstruction assistance. The Compact secretariat continues to oversee the work of thematic working groups and to make progress on a six-month work plan intended to move all aspects of the Compact forward.

The humanitarian situation in Iraq continues to be alarming and provides ample evidence of the impact violence in Iraq has on civilians on a daily basis. The estimated number of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) rose to 4.2 million, with monthly displacement rates climbing to over 60,000 persons. The Iraqi Cabinet decision to provide financial assistance to refugee host countries, in accordance with the commitment made in Geneva last April, is a welcome and much-needed development. Now it is time to finalize the delivery mechanism for that support so that vital assistance to the refugee population is immediately bolstered. The international community also has a large assistance role to play, and I hope that all commitments are honoured in a timely manner. The ultimate solution to the humanitarian crisis, however, will only be realized when the political, economic and security situation inside Iraq permits the safe return of refugees and IDPs to their homes.

The Secretary-General's latest report once again expresses serious concern about the current human rights situation in Iraq. The Government of Iraq has a particular responsibility to bring perpetrators of human rights abuses to justice, as well as to strengthen the institutions that promote the rule of law, particularly the security forces and the judiciary. The United Nations welcomes the commitment of the Iraqi Government to that goal. UNAMI and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights are committed to working closely with the Government on how best to realize an early improvement in the human rights situation.

Taking into account the current security situation, the United Nations is working to create the necessary preconditions to fulfil an enhanced role in Iraq. The Secretary-General has increased the staff ceilings in Baghdad from 65 to 85 and in Erbil from 29 to 35; an outreach programme that places national liaison officers in each of the Governors' offices has begun, and we are looking into re-establishing the United Nations presence in Basra. UNAMI and the country team have also adopted an area-based approach that expands activities where circumstances are more permissible. The Mission continues to work to become increasingly self-sufficient in areas of logistical support and security, and plans for a new integrated headquarters in Baghdad have been developed.

In the light of the tasks and challenges before us, the United Nations will continue to rely on Member States for support. It is important that the United Nations be afforded the necessary political and humanitarian space to implement the new mandate, and the ability of the Organization to talk with all sides must be protected and respected. Security arrangements and financial and logistical backing are also essential for the success of the United Nations Mission in Iraq.

We are grateful to those Member States that have provided protection and logistical support to the United Nations presence in Iraq, including those providing air support and troops for the Distinct Entity to provide security for UNAMI. Given the new mandate in Iraq, I urge Member States to provide additional financial and logistical resources for the Mission. That includes funding for dedicated air assets, support for funding for the new integrated United Nations facility in Baghdad and additional required security arrangements, such as the provision of military advisers.

Of immediate concern is the status of the trust fund established to support the Distinct Entity that provides protection for the United Nations in accordance with Security Council resolution 1546 (2004). This security arrangement will be required at least through 2008. However, the trust fund will be exhausted next month. Without immediate financial assistance, the ability of the United Nations to operate in Iraq could be severely compromised.

In conclusion, strong international efforts to counter the unfolding crises in Iraq are critical. The international community not only has a vital security stake in the stability of Iraq; it also has a responsibility to encourage and enable the Government of Iraq to build inclusive and cumulative processes that can bring about stability. While the Government of Iraq acknowledges that it has the primary responsibility for this task, the magnitude and number of challenges confronting the Government entitle it to call upon the international community for necessary assistance. It is our belief that the new United Nations mandate, matched by strong international support, provides the necessary framework to move towards building a more stable Iraq.

The President: I thank Mr. Pascoe for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Zalmay Khalilzad, Permanent Representative of the United States of America.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): It is my pleasure to report today on behalf of the Multinational Forces in Iraq (MNF-I), as requested by Security Council resolutions 1546 (2004), 1637 (2005) and 1723 (2006).

I was pleased to hear the report on the work of United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), especially in the light of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1770 (2007) and the appointment of Mr. Staffan de Mistura as Special Representative of the Secretary-General. We appreciated the efforts of former Special Representative Qazi, and are ready to work closely with Mr. De Mistura on how we can best support UNAMI's efforts under its expanded mandate. We look forward to the work of UNAMI in its expanded role, especially in assisting the Government of Iraq to implement its programme of national reconciliation, regional engagement and humanitarian relief.

The United States shares with the people of Iraq the goal of achieving a secure, stable and democratic Iraq at peace with itself and its neighbours. To reach that goal, Iraq must overcome profound political, economic and security challenges. Progress in those areas is inherently linked. For example, when the Multinational Force in Iraq (MNF-I) and Iraqi security forces made security gains in the provinces of Al Anbar and Diyala, we enabled the provincial councils to hold regular meetings, which in turn led to progress in restoring services, developing the economy and executing provincial budgets. As a result, by September the provincial government of Al Anbar had committed 80 per cent of its 2006 capital budget and 49 per cent of its 2007 budget.

Last year, recognizing that MNF-I could help them to eject Al-Qaida, tribes in Al Anbar began to fight with us against extremists. As a result, the landscape of Al Anbar is dramatically different. The security progress has been extraordinary. Seven months ago violence was still rampant. Residents of Al Anbar lived in fear of Al-Qaida, and MNF-I troops were under daily attack. Now the situation is largely stable and quiet, permitting reconstruction to take place. Similar scenes are unfolding in parts of Diyala and Ninawa. More and more Iraqis are mobilizing, with the help of MNF-I and Iraqi security forces, to evict Al-Qaida and extremist forces from their communities.

Shia extremists are also facing rejection. Recent attacks by extremist elements of Jaish al-Mahdi on

worshippers in Karbala provoked a backlash and triggered calls for Jaish al-Mahdi to cease attacks against Iraqi and MNF-I forces.

A key challenge for Iraqis now is to link those positive developments in the provinces to the central Government in Baghdad. The growing ability of the provinces to design and execute budgets, and the readiness of the Central Government to provide resources for them, represent some of the nuts and bolts of good governance and are success stories.

The support of the central Government is also needed to maintain hard-won security in areas like Al Anbar, by supporting increases in locally generated police. The Iraqi Government has placed some 21,000 Anbaris on police rolls.

Improved security also creates the conditions for progress in the national economy. Infrastructure is being repaired, and markets are reviving. The Iraqi Government has reported growth of at least 6 per cent, with inflation slowing. The budget execution rate in the provinces is at least twice that of last year. In addition, the Government's 2007 budget allocates \$10 billion to capital investment. Further improvement, especially in the countryside, could bring down transport costs for agricultural and manufactured goods. One sign of confidence in the future of Iraq's economy was the recent issuance of three licenses for mobile telephones, valued at a record \$3.75 billion.

International and regional engagement are also improving. In addition, with the adoption of resolution 1770 (2007) in August, we are seeing the International Compact with Iraq moving forward. The United Nations has reported progress in 75 per cent of the 400 areas Iraq has identified for action. We are also looking forward to the next meeting of the expanded neighbours' group, which will convene in Istanbul in less than two weeks. Staffan de Mistura, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq, will be in attendance. We look forward to hearing his ideas on how the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq can support the neighbours' group in its constructive engagement with Iraq.

Unfortunately, some of Iraq's neighbours appear to believe that they can benefit from instability in Iraq. While claiming to support Iraq, Iran has provided lethal aid to both radical Shia and Sunni militants inside Iraq, who attack Iraqi officials, innocent civilians and Coalition forces.

Syria is also playing a destabilizing role in Iraq. Although Syria hosted a meeting of the neighbours' border security working group, it continues to provide a safe haven for elements of the former regime, who now serve as key financiers and leaders of the insurgency. While Syria has arrested some foreign terrorists bound for Iraq, it remains the principal transit hub for Iraq-bound terrorists. To make credible claims to support the Iraqi people, Syria should do more — such as implement a screening process to make it more difficult for foreign extremists to enter and transit to Iraq.

On the security front, the 2007 surge has given besieged communities the confidence to work with MNF-I to defeat Al-Qaida and violent extremists. The military objectives are, in large measure, being met. Population security measures have made it more difficult for terrorists to conduct attacks. The overall number of security incidents in Iraq continues to decline, because we have dealt significant blows to Al-Qaida in Iraq, and we have disrupted Shia militia extremists. The overall number of civilian deaths has also declined in 2007, although the numbers are still at unacceptable levels. The number of arms caches found and cleared in 2007 increased by approximately 20 per cent over the previous year. From June to September, attacks with improvised explosive devices decreased by about 20 per cent, as compared to the previous year.

Iraqi security forces continue to grow and to shoulder more of the load, albeit slowly and amid continuing concerns about the sectarian tendencies of some elements in their ranks, inadequate logistics and supporting institutions and an insufficient number of qualified commissioned and non-commissioned officers. There are now 152 Iraqi army, national police and special operations forces battalions operating alongside MNF-I — about two thirds of which are capable of leading operations, albeit with some MNF-I support. The Iraqi Defence and Interior Ministries are employing 445,000 people, a number that could reach 519,000 by the end of the year. MNF-I has employed counterinsurgency practices that underscore the importance of units living among the people they are securing. Accordingly, our forces have established dozens of joint security stations and patrol bases, manned by MNF-I and Iraqi forces, in Baghdad and other areas across Iraq.

In mid-June, when all the surge brigades were in place, MNF-I launched a series of offensive operations

focused on expanding the gains achieved in the preceding months in Al Anbar province — clearing Baquba and several key Baghdad neighbourhoods and important areas in the so-called belt around Baghdad and pursuing Al-Qaida in the Diyala River Valley and other areas. Meanwhile, MNF-I engaged in dialogue with former insurgent groups and tribes, in conjunction with Iraqi officials, to broker local ceasefires and gain their support in rooting out Al-Qaida in their communities. We also continue to emphasize the development of Iraqi security forces. Four provinces have already been handed over to provincial Iraqi control. We anticipate that several more will be transferred to Iraqi control in the coming months.

The security situation in Iraq is being transformed. Some of the players are changing sides. Despite ongoing violence, we see a qualitative shift against extremism as an improvement. Iraqis are taking on more responsibility for protecting themselves. But, in the coming months, we must redouble our efforts to improve security within Iraq and prevent human suffering, while preserving regional security and stability. The leadership of Iraq also has a responsibility to take concrete steps to pursue reconciliation, so that the political track can catch up with the improvements in security.

On 26 August, Iraq's five most prominent leaders from three major communities expressed gratitude for the sacrifices these forces have made for Iraq and agreed on the need for the continued presence of the Multinational Force in Iraq. To that end, Iraqis stressed the importance of renewing the mandate of resolution 1723 (2006) for another year. We expect to put forth a draft resolution in that regard before the end of the year.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): We thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting. I would also like to thank the representative of the United States for his presentation of the quarterly oral report of the multinational force and the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs for his comprehensive briefing on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

This is the first meeting to be held since the adoption of resolution 1770 (2007), which constitutes a turning point for the presence of the United Nations in Iraq. Following reduced United Nations role in Iraq in recent years, the time has come for the international Organization to play a more effective part in assisting

the people and Government of Iraq in the process of achieving security, stability and development.

The United Nations provides valuable assistance to Iraq in several areas, such as constitutional support, electoral assistance, reconstruction, development, humanitarian assistance, human rights and other areas that will help to speed up Iraq's extrication from its current situation, regain its natural position as a stable, prosperous and active State in the international community, and enable its people to benefit from its enormous wealth. There is no doubt that the United Nations can make a more effective contribution not only in those areas, but in other areas as well, such as encouraging the implementation of the International Compact with Iraq and taking action to promote the constructive role of the neighbouring countries in order to serve the interests of Iraq and the Iraqi people.

The United Nations can also play a bigger role in stimulating national dialogue in Iraq among the various groups, given its comparative advantages and the prevailing conditions in Iraq. We agree with the Secretary-General that there is a need to seize this opportunity. As time passes, we are becoming increasingly convinced of the importance of national reconciliation in Iraq among the various groups of its people, and that this accord constitutes the most important precondition for emerging from the current difficult situation.

In order to succeed in their efforts to restore stability to Iraq, build its national institutions and reinvigorate its development, the Government of Iraq, UNAMI and the multinational force need to make concerted efforts and cooperate effectively among themselves.

With regard to the issue of refugees and internally displaced persons, the situation is deteriorating by the day and, given its humanitarian dimensions, constitutes a threat to stability. The Government of Iraq therefore needs to resolve the problem, with the help of the international community, and necessary assistance must be provided to the neighbouring countries that are bearing the brunt of the situation.

Another cause for concern is the issue of the accountability of private security companies for their violations of international humanitarian law and the need for them to be held accountable for their crimes. No violation of human rights in Iraq must be overlooked and due process in dealing with detainees

must be ensured. All who commit such violations must be held to account.

Ensuring the stability of the security situation remains at the top of Iraq's concerns. In our view, it is essential to address the issue of stability through an integrated approach that includes the continuous strengthening of the Iraqi security forces, the rehabilitation of former combatants from the armed groups, and solving the humanitarian and socio-economic problems that negatively affect the welfare of the Iraqi people. National reconciliation should also be supported and Iraqi leaders need to act in a spirit of responsibility in that regard.

Steps are currently being taken to strengthen UNAMI so that it can carry out its mandated tasks pursuant to resolution 1770 (2007). Ensuring the safety and security of the Mission's personnel should be a top priority, especially in view of the lack of security in Iraq.

Finally, we wish the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and all the personnel of UNAMI success in their difficult task.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for his briefing on the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) covering the months that have passed since the Council adopted resolution 1770 (2007), which reviewed and considerably broadened United Nations authority in Iraq.

We listened attentively to the briefing given by the Permanent Representative of the United States, Mr. Khalilzad, on the work of the multinational force.

Russia shares many of the assessments and concerns on the situation in Iraq set out in the Secretary-General's report. Indeed, the situation there continues to remain extremely tense. In spite of some signs of improvement in the situation in Baghdad and a number of provinces, violence and terrorist activity remain integral realities in Iraq.

In our view, the greatest threat today is the sectarian divisions in Iraqi society referred to at length in the report. That phenomenon proves the need for focused resolve in attempts to find a solution; it also continues to sink new roots into Iraqi soil. We have also heard alarming predictions about an inevitable

hardening of the civil conflict and even the collapse of the Iraqi State.

The complex situation is eloquently illustrated in the problems of the future of Kirkuk and the tense situation on the Iraq-Turkey border. In that regard, we call once again for a peaceful settlement in the northern Iraqi regions and reiterate that we fully support the principle of the territorial integrity of Iraq and Turkey alike.

The escalation of the Iraqi crisis might not only dangerously destabilize the entire Middle East, but also spill over far beyond its boundaries. It is obvious that Iraq's neighbours would not be well served by such developments. We do not believe that the point of no return has been reached. The possibility of achieving stability remains. We are convinced that it is impossible to normalize the situation in Iraq exclusively by force. We therefore feel that a realistic and lasting settlement can be achieved only through political means, by developing broad-based inter-Iraqi dialogue and achieving national reconciliation and harmony. The United Nations can and must help the Iraqis to do so.

Judging from the report, the United Nations side is in agreement. Moreover, we fully support the Secretary-General's assertion that the United Nations, participating in the Iraqi process, must enjoy the right to interact with all parties and that this right must be defended.

We recognize that, bearing in mind the current acute security problems, it will not be easy for UNAMI to assume new tasks, but we need to do everything we can to that end, first and foremost by restoring Iraqi confidence in the United Nations representatives. It is therefore important to develop a mechanism for cooperation with Iraq's authorities that would allow the Mission to play a credible role in political and socio-economic processes initiated by the leadership of that country. In that regard, Baghdad must ratify the status-of-mission agreement as soon as possible so as to settle once and for all the legal formalities for the duration of its stay in the country. Finally, we believe that a firm schedule for the multinational force's stay might also help to ease tension in Iraq.

We understand that a hasty withdrawal of coalition forces would have deleterious consequences, but that is not the true issue.

We are convinced that a timeline for reduction of the foreign military presence in Iraq, with the prospect of full withdrawal, would substantially defuse the situation. We would like to draw the attention of Council members to an incident to which the report refers: the killing of Iraqi civilians by personnel of the private security firm Blackwater. We share the concerns stated in the report of the Secretary-General, and we support the approach of the Iraqi authorities to put an end to activities by the many mercenary groups operating on Iraqi soil that violate Iraqi law. I should mention that the exploits of those so-called sub-contractors are hurting not only Iraqis, but also Baghdad-based foreign diplomatic representatives, including Russian representatives.

We believe that, without effective international assistance to the political settlement process, the leaders of Iraqi communities and parties will have difficulty in overcoming their mutual distrust. As early as 2003 we proposed the convening of a representative international conference on Iraq, with the participation of all major political forces in the country, including its patriotic opposition, leading world Powers and influential regional States. Although our initiative was not acted upon at that time, it remains in force. We have supported and will continue to support all proposals that are in keeping with that approach.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for his briefing and the representative of the United States for his briefing on behalf of the Multinational Force in Iraq.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/608) indicates a reduction in the level of acts of violence, but in Peru's estimation that has not yet been sufficient to prevent the continued deterioration of the humanitarian crisis resulting from the wave of refugees and internally displaced persons who are fleeing the violence in Iraq. Nor has there been a significant change in the human rights situation, in spite of improved cooperation between the Iraqi Government and the Multinational Force, as shown in the most recent human rights report by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). On the contrary, in some cases the situation has deteriorated, in particular with regard to religious and ethnic minorities. Iraqi leaders have not taken advantage of the decrease in acts of violence to unblock the

deadlocked political process or to prevent sectarian fighting.

Living conditions continue to deteriorate. Even the water supply is no longer guaranteed; cholera has broken out and school attendance is of great concern. The worsening situation means that the cost of reconstructing Iraq's social, economic and political fabric continues to increase. That is the price that Iraqi civilians are paying for the lack of dialogue between the country's leaders and the lack of a spirit of compromise in order to make headway on the sensitive issues on the political agenda.

Peru is extremely concerned by the present internal political situation in Iraq. Neither the parliament's failure to take decisions nor the weakening of the Government due to boycotts and resignations by some of its members contribute to the stability of the country. This deepens distrust among communities.

It is important to remember that the Iraqis themselves bear primary responsibility for the future of their country. We hope that the country's various sectors will understand that international efforts at this stage of reconstruction require their commitment to dialogue and reconciliation. We hope that the Prime Minister will make every effort to lead that dialogue and to work to revive the spirit of compromise among his fellow citizens.

We believe that, to achieve that goal, essential elements for dialogue and national reconciliation continue to be the following: security issues; the distribution of oil revenues; resolution of the problem of Kirkuk; constitutional reform; allocation of functions between the central Government and the regions; and de-Baathification. In order to encourage dialogue and democratic reconciliation, the security situation must first and foremost be brought under control. Terrorism, as well as militias and other armed groups beyond the control of the State, must be eradicated.

In this struggle, human rights and international humanitarian law must be respected by all with a stake in maintaining law and order and public security. In a democracy, use of force not subject to the law and inconsistent with respect for human rights and international humanitarian law cannot be permitted. A single, credible and non-sectarian body is required to

legitimize the use of force in Iraq. Here, the militias must be disarmed. Effective, credible and legitimate security forces can be partners in stabilizing the country and fully restoring its sovereignty. These responsibilities must be transferred more quickly from the Multinational Force to the Iraqi forces.

Peru also regrets the deterioration in the human rights situation and urges Iraqi authorities and the international community to continue to build a democracy that respects human rights. There must be no place for impunity in the establishment of democratic institutions in Iraq. The *raison d'être* of a State is to protect the lives and the human rights of its citizens. Those who attack the rule of law or human rights should be called to account in a court of law.

In the endeavour to restore hope to the Iraqi people, progress in rebuilding the infrastructure and economic and social development are of the greatest importance. The International Compact with Iraq is an important framework for international assistance. Conditions for its implementation will improve with improvements in security, reconciliation and transparency, and with the enactment of national laws that reflect solid political agreements on the management of natural resources. Iraq's oil wealth must be dealt with in a responsible and transparent manner. Distribution of oil revenue in a negotiated fashion will help to improve the climate of understanding among Iraqis, and will engender confidence that those resources will benefit all citizens.

For any effort to stabilize Iraq to be viable, neighbouring countries too must cooperate. Iraq and its neighbours must continue to act cautiously and diligently to address urgent issues on their common agenda while avoiding unilateral action that would complicate the delicate situation in Iraq. Peru urges a stronger spirit of multilateral assistance for Iraq.

Finally, Peru expresses its support for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq. We consider that it should continue, consistent with its mandate and with the possibilities on the ground, to work to consolidate all activities that can help attain political and legal stability, institutional and economic reconstruction, humanitarian assistance and the protection of human rights in Iraq.

Mr. Ripert (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I wish to join previous speakers in thanking Under-

Secretary-General Pascoe and Ambassador Khalilzad for their briefings.

Iraq continues to face challenges that involve considerable risks to the region to the entire international community. They include political, security, humanitarian and economic challenges.

The humanitarian and security situation described this morning is extremely disturbing, inasmuch as continuing violence forces ever-larger numbers of civilians to flee their homes. There are now more than 2 million internally displaced persons and more than 2 million refugees. In that vein, I wish to pay tribute to neighbouring countries and their peoples, who, in extraordinary conditions, have to date have taken in these refugees; I make special mention of Jordan and Syria.

For its part, France is supporting the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in assisting internally displaced persons and refugees. In that context, it is now more necessary than ever to work together to find solutions by supporting the efforts of the Baghdad authorities. On Wednesday, 17 October, the President of the French Republic reaffirmed to President Talabani during his visit to Paris that France firmly supports the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. Of course, the Iraqis themselves understand that they must come together in order to regain control of their own future and to put in place institutions that can bring about a consensus that will enable them to build a society of peace.

The key is a genuine process of national reconciliation that is as inclusive as possible in order to isolate the forces that threaten the unity, sovereignty and stability of Iraq. Moreover, the States of the region have an important role to play and should therefore show sincere and complete willingness to contribute to stability and reconstruction in Iraq. France supports the process involving neighbouring countries that led to the establishment of thematic working groups, and hopes that this process will lead to tangible results at the ministerial meeting in the beginning of November in Istanbul, where Mr. Kouchner, our Minister for Foreign Affairs, will participate.

In the context of a withdrawal horizon for foreign forces, the international community through the United Nations should strengthen its own mobilization. We support strengthening the role of the United Nations

Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), which permitted the adoption of resolution 1770 (2007). After the high-level meeting of 22 September, the first proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report (S/2007/608) — strengthening of staffing in Baghdad and Arbil, a United Nations presence in Basra, setting up a follow-up mechanism of the neighbouring countries process — all of these proposals open the door to strengthening the different areas where the United Nations plays a role.

In the political area, there is a possibility to contribute to dialogue and national reconciliation. We are also thinking about what could be done to assist the grave humanitarian situation, to strengthen the protection of civilians, to enforce respect for human rights and international humanitarian law and to fight against impunity. The initial responsibility lies, of course, with the Iraqi Government, as it is not only the protection of their own people that is involved, but also the protection of United Nations staff and associated staff. It is a disturbing situation as we have seen in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/608). It is urgent to act.

In terms of economics, there is the International Compact with Iraq. In this respect, we should recall that in order for international assistance and cooperation to be effective and in order for economic growth to be a permanent fixture in Iraq, the authorities must establish mechanisms and rules of management that allow for good governance.

This strengthening of the United Nations presence on the ground should obviously bear in mind the constraints having to do with security. Here I would like to pay tribute to the work done by UNAMI, as well as the humanitarian workers. They are operating under conditions that make it very difficult and dangerous to contribute to the protection of civilians and to provide assistance to people in need.

France supports and will continue to support the United Nations in this difficult undertaking. My country also intends to contribute to thinking done within the European Union, encouraging it to become more resolutely involved in Iraq through specific initiatives.

As Bernard Kouchner indicated in New York on 22 September, France will become involved in particular in supporting the health sector and justice, in this latter case through the training of magistrates in

Iraq. Starting in the next few weeks, we will launch the first initiatives in the northern part of the country with an increase in France's consular presence.

With everyone's joint efforts, the people of Iraq will be able to find the peace and security that they are entitled in a State that is unified, free and democratic. We are positively committed to this.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): I would like to join previous speakers in thanking Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Lynn Pascoe, for his comprehensive briefing.

My delegation also thanks the representative of the United States, who spoke on behalf of the Multinational Force.

Ongoing violence in Iraq continues to pose serious challenges to the Government and people of Iraq in their efforts to achieve progress in reconstruction and nation-building. After years of hardship, the Iraqi people deserve peace, stability and progress. Considering the significance of security and stability for making progress in the political and socio-economic sectors, my delegation has little doubt that the Government of Iraq recognizes the importance of enhanced efforts, in cooperation with international forces, to find viable solution to the security concerns in the country.

Since conflict in Iraq has been unfolding across ethnic, sectarian and political lines, Indonesia holds the view that responsibility for restoring security and stability lies not only with the Iraqi Government, but also with all factions in the country. In this regard, Indonesia welcomes the ceasefire by some factions that led to the decrease in violence during September 2007.

The key to sustainable peace in Iraq is unity. Continued high levels of displacement and political gridlock have reduced the opportunity for concord. My delegation therefore believes that the people of Iraq should stand side-by-side at all levels, set aside all ethnic, religious and political differences and work together in order to respond to the challenges that continue to confront the country. Genuine commitment by all factions to political dialogue and reconciliation is needed more now than ever.

The international community should leave no stone unturned in promoting conditions conducive to such reconciliation. In that regard, my delegation commends the efforts of the Special Representative of

the Secretary-General in maintaining contacts with political, religious and tribal leaders to encourage an inclusive political process aimed at bolstering security improvements in Iraq.

The International Compact with Iraq, which is premised on a reciprocal relationship between peacebuilding and economic prosperity, remains an important framework for international partnership with Iraq. The Compact will require institutional support in order to be effective. Accordingly, my delegation welcomes the establishment of the Compact secretariat as an agency of the Government of Iraq operating with the support of the United Nations to facilitate the implementation of the Compact.

The reaffirmation of support expressed by delegations in the September high-level meeting on Iraq reflects the continuing solidarity of the international community with Iraq. In our view, such a reaffirmation should help to strengthen the commitment of Iraqis to the goals of the Compact.

The continuing violence in Iraq has brought about serious humanitarian consequences. It has caused not only displacement, but also restriction of movement and limitation of access for humanitarian operations. We are troubled by reports of the increase in the number of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons. The condition faced by Iraqi children is also a source of particular concern.

With 4.2 million Iraqis being displaced, humanitarian assistance becomes a daunting but essential task. In this regard, Indonesia welcomes the launch of a joint appeal by a number of United Nations specialized agencies in September 2007 to address the urgent health needs of Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries.

Coordination is essential in implementing well-targeted humanitarian aid for the Iraqi displaced persons and refugees. Accordingly, Indonesia believes that the United Nations can play a key role in supporting the Iraqi Government and host neighbouring countries to coordinate their humanitarian activities.

Support from countries in the region remains instrumental in building the capacity of the Iraqi Government to respond to various challenges. The continued implementation of the outcome of the Sharm el-Sheikh conference, including its working groups, is

of paramount importance. We also attach great importance to the next expanded meeting of Iraq's neighbours to be convened in Turkey next month.

International partnership and support are key for Iraq as it faces the innumerable challenges ahead. The role and contribution of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) is particularly pertinent in helping the Iraqis achieve their goals. My delegation recognizes the increasing responsibility of UNAMI as tasked by Security Council resolution 1770 (2007), which my delegation fully supported. We, however, underline the importance to ensure a balance between the expansion of tasks and availability of adequate resources. This will eventually assure the success of the Mission.

While taking into account the security challenges, the deployment of UNAMI to new areas will increase access for the Iraqis to international assistance. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the dispatch of a UNAMI team to explore the possibility of deploying staff to a new location in Basra.

Finally, I wish to reiterate Indonesia's full support for UNAMI and its work in Iraq.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): Like previous speakers, I wish to express my thanks to the Secretary-General for his report (S/2007/608) and to thank Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for the briefing.

We fully share both the positive and negative assessments of others regarding the challenges, so I will be very brief in my remarks.

I also wish to thank Ambassador Khalilzad for his briefing on behalf of the Multinational force, and I must say that we have noted and strongly welcome the positive and encouraging developments on which he has briefed us. Let us hope that in the future, those encouraging developments will deepen and expand. I believe that we all have the responsibility to give oxygen to this process.

I think our starting point should be the Secretary-General's view, which was recalled by Ambassador Pascoe: "there is an opportunity today that should not be missed". Once again, I think that that is a starting point. We are at a critical juncture, and we have to move quickly and decisively in all directions. Any improvement in the security situation is an opportunity to take, so that we can build what Iraqis really need: a

national compact, a shared vision of their common future as a people and as a nation.

As stated in the report, by Mr. Pascoe in his briefing and by other speakers preceding me, the responsibility for the internal political process lies with the Iraqi people and their legitimate institutions. But, at the same time, the United Nations now has a fundamental and substantially expanded role, as set forth in resolution 1770 (2007). The Iraqi people, as Ambassador Qazi told us in June, are faced with choices that “are not black or white; nor are they zero-sum” (S/PV.5693, p. 3). The United Nations is uniquely suited to identify gray areas that can accommodate all the legitimate concerns of the participants in the political process, and it is up to all of us to empower it to do so. I believe, that, as Ambassador Pascoe told us, “it is important that the United Nations be afforded the necessary political and humanitarian space to implement the new mandate, and the ability of the Organization to talk with all sides must be protected and respected (*supra*)”.

Another crucial element is the ongoing regional dialogue between Iraq and its neighbours, which has been touched upon by many previous speakers. We welcome last September’s initiative, by the Secretary-General and the Iraqi Government, to convene a ministerial meeting. We strongly support the ongoing process that began with the extended meeting of neighbouring countries at Sharm el-Sheikh, and we look forward to the next meeting, to be held in Istanbul. We have also noted, as a positive sign, the indication of strong United Nations engagement in the process of facilitating the dialogue with the neighbours.

Furthermore, we continue to be extremely concerned by the humanitarian situation. We commend the efforts of those countries that have received Iraqi refugees, as well as the efforts of the United Nations. For its part, Italy responded to last July’s Joint Appeal of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF by giving more than \$4.2 million for activities to benefit Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons in Iraq, Syria and Jordan.

We have to proceed effectively in the implementation of the International Compact with Iraq and in the reconstruction effort. Italy, as Co-Chair of the Donor Committee of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI), is

planning to convene the sixth meeting of the Donor Committee in Bari, Italy, on 28 and 29 October, in nine days’ time. At the Bari meeting, we will consider the final recommendations emerging from the review of the IRFFI terms of reference, conducted during the past month. The goals of the review are, as we know, to ensure strong Iraqi ownership and leadership of the IRFFI process; to ensure clear alignment of the IRFFI with Iraqi priorities as contained in the country’s national development strategy and the International Compact with Iraq; and to clarify and streamline the values component of IRFFI governance. We are confident that the revised terms of reference will respond to all those goals.

A more effective IRFFI will be an important tool at the disposal of the international community — a tool that responds to the appeal of Ambassador Pascoe that security arrangements and financial and logistical backing are also essential for the success of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq. That is what we are trying to do.

At the same time, unified leadership by the Secretary-General, through his Special Representative for Iraq, over the contributions of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as stipulated in resolution 1770 (2007), is an essential step towards making the international contribution to Iraq’s reconstruction more effective.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Permit me at the outset to thank Ambassador Pascoe for introducing the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/608). Belgium agrees with its analysis and its recommendations.

A little less than a year ago, the United Nations sent a double warning to Iraq and the international community as a whole: first, that there was a risk that the continued waves of terrorist attacks and sectarian violence could lead to a widespread civil war; and, secondly, that there was a danger that such a destabilization would affect not only Iraq, but the entire region.

A year later, that risk and that danger are far from having disappeared from Iraq. Certainly, we can cautiously welcome the fact that, for the first time, the number of victims seems to be on the decline, particularly in Baghdad. But, whether in Baghdad, Mosul or Basra, Iraqis — particularly civilians — belonging to all faiths and ethnic groups continue to suffer an intolerable level of violence. Today more than

yesterday, that security challenge cannot be overcome through an exclusively military approach.

With regard to its population, the Iraqi Government now has the obligation to redouble its efforts to achieve reconciliation among all parties, based on the notions of the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights. To that end, the tools available to the Iraqis are well known: revising the Constitution to restore Iraqis' confidence in a State that guarantees that all communities can enjoy their right to participate in a common future; continuing the legislative work on sensitive issues such as the management of hydrocarbon resources, the Baathist legacy and the implementation of article 140 of the Constitution; and, finally, strengthening institutions — particularly the law enforcement forces — based on the democratic rule of law and respect for fundamental rights. For our country, the efforts of Iraq's Government and parliament over the past few months confirm the relevance of that assessment. However, a long road still lies ahead, and greater efforts are needed to attain the aforementioned objectives.

The other lesson of the past few months is the twofold realization of the international community: on the one hand, that the challenges facing Iraq do not end at its borders, but also affect neighbouring countries and the international community as a whole; and, on the other, that it is our duty and in our interests to help the Iraqi authorities in their efforts to find a response.

That realization has led to several initiatives, which Belgium welcomes and in which we have participated, directly or through the intermediary of the European Union: the conference of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on displaced persons, held in April at Geneva; the launching, in May at Sharm el-Sheikh, of the International Compact with Iraq, aimed at its reconstruction and development; the regional consultation organized at the ministerial level by the World Health Organization, held in late July at Damascus; the forthcoming meeting at Bari to discuss the future of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq; and, in early November at Istanbul, the continuation of Iraq's discussions with its neighbours and with major actors in the international community.

Belgium supports the process begun by the Iraqi Government in March in Baghdad. That systematization of a political and technical dialogue

should permit increased stabilization of the region, with mutual respect for the strengthened sovereignty of Iraq and of its neighbouring States.

However, in addition to increasing the number of these initiatives, we should ensure that we maximize the benefits of the partnership thus created between Iraq and the international community, by empowering the Iraqi Government and regional actors and by guaranteeing, in addition to their unique characteristics, the complementarity and coherence of these initiatives so that we can have a real impact on the daily life of the populations concerned.

It is out of this concern for coherence that Belgium welcomes the renewed mandate that resolution 1770 (2007) gave to the United Nations in Iraq this summer. Although we are aware of the limits imposed by the persistent lack of security, we express our full support to the Secretary-General in his determination to have the United Nations play a strengthened role of coordinator and catalyst of everyone's efforts to help Iraqi people to build the country that they deserve.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to join others in thanking Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for his introductory remarks. We welcome the opportunity for a briefing by Ambassador Khalilzad on behalf of the Multinational Force in Iraq. I would also like to avail myself of this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Ashraf Qazi and to thank him for his distinguished contribution to the people of Iraq during his three-year tenure as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq.

Although the situation in Iraq has improved to some extent, the country still faces formidable challenges in the political, security, reconstruction and humanitarian spheres. The number of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons has been increasing monthly. The humanitarian situation in Iraq has become the most serious humanitarian crisis confronting the world today. How to further stabilize the situation so that the process of Iraq's peaceful reconstruction and reconciliation can embark upon a smooth path is an issue meriting serious consideration by the Iraqi Government and the international community. We subscribe to the views expressed by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2007/608).

Political compromise and genuine attempts to work across ethnic, sectarian and political lines are

needed now more than ever. In the final analysis, the future of Iraq should be decided by the Iraqi themselves. It is our hope that all political leaders in Iraq will demonstrate courage, take resolute measures, positively respond to the aspirations of the Iraqi people and the international community and seek unity and cooperation. Of course, achieving the proper solution of the Iraqi situation and its issues also poses a test for the international community. The United Nations should continue to stand by the Iraqi people and should be prepared to provide all useful assistance and help, as required.

Resolution 1770 (2007) is very important. It authorizes the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) to play a more active role in assisting Iraq in national reconciliation, regional dialogue, economic reconstruction and humanitarian relief. In that connection, we are looking forward to full engagement by the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, once he is in Iraq. We hope that he will implement the mandate of the resolution and take full advantage of the impartiality, expertise and authority of the United Nations, and that he will make a fully committed effort to change the Iraqi situation for the better. It is our hope, too, that the parties inside and outside Iraq will provide energetic support to the Special Representative, to provide him with the conditions and space he needs to play for his designated role.

Ensuring the safety and security of the facilities and personnel of UNAMI is an important prerequisite for the effective operation of the Mission. The security risks in Iraq continue to constrain UNAMI's daily operations. We express our serious concern about that. It is our belief that the Iraqi Government and the Multinational Force should shoulder the critical responsibility in that regard. No effort should be spared to provide UNAMI with all the necessary security guarantees so that it can carry out the operations mandated by the Security Council.

A stable, united, prosperous Iraq will not only live up to the aspirations and expectations of all of the Iraqi people, but also be conducive to the peace and tranquillity of Iraq's neighbours and of the Middle East region as a whole. The Sharm el-Sheikh process initiated last May shows the resolve of countries of the region to strengthen regional cooperation and maintain the stability of Iraq. The international community should pay heightened attention to the views and

suggestions of those regional countries on the issue of Iraq. We are happy to see that Iraq has improved its relations with neighbouring and other regional countries. It is our hope that all parties concerned will maintain this momentum of cooperation and will work harder to make substantial progress at the second expanded meeting of Iraq's neighbouring countries, to be held in Istanbul in November.

Mr. Suescum (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of Panama, I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Pascoe and Ambassador Khalilzad for the briefings that they have given us. We also take note of the concern the Secretary-General has expressed on the question of Iraq. We also thank former Special Representative Ashraf Qazi for his important work at the head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The delegation of Panama is aware of the very difficult conditions in which he and all UNAMI personnel have worked.

Iraq is experiencing a critical situation, and great attention must be devoted to it not only by the Security Council but by the international community in general. We are deeply concerned by the humanitarian situation as a consequence of the violence taking place in Iraq. The UNAMI report on human rights in Iraq which was released on 11 October shows the darkest side of this conflict: millions of Iraqis forced to abandon their homes, many of them living in dire conditions, without access to food and basic services, with children being particularly vulnerable to disease.

In view of this situation, the United Nations must take on a more active role in Iraq, providing assistance in order to strengthen the Iraq Government's capacity to respond in the best possible way to the humanitarian needs of its people. UNAMI should carry out its work in an impartial but not a neutral way. Its activities should take into account all political, religious and tribal sectors. Otherwise, it will only feed resentment and create more violence. Only in that way will progress be achieved in the social and material reconstruction that can bring with it a reduction in violence and the return to their homes of the current 4.2 million displaced and refugee Iraqis.

National reconciliation requires a true commitment from the international community to rebuild the institutions of a country that is divided by deep wounds from the past. We call on the United Nations to redouble its efforts in its activities to

achieve inclusivity in the political process and dialogue in Iraq. We stress the preponderant role of leaders of Iraq in this context. Those Iraqi leaders need to have political courage. Only in that way can violence be reduced, and only by reducing violence can due respect for the human rights of millions of Iraqis be guaranteed.

We recognize the progress noted by the International Compact with Iraq in its mid-year report, and we trust that the international community, especially neighbouring countries in the region, will continue to support this initiative.

We also would like to recognize the importance of Iraq's presence and participation in the Council's deliberations. It is important that in the future the Council continue to listen to Iraq's opinion on the participation of the United Nations in the conflict.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): We thank Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe for his briefing on the report before us and the representative of the United States, Ambassador Khalilzad, for his briefing on the activities of the Multinational Force in Iraq.

We view positively the rounds of talks, negotiations and visits by the Iraqi Prime Minister to neighbouring countries and further abroad in trying to find lasting solutions to the problems of Iraq. We also welcome the ongoing work of the International Compact with Iraq and we note the commitment of the participants, who work in partnership with the Government of Iraq to ensure stability, security and economic reconstruction.

Notwithstanding those positive developments, my delegation remains gravely concerned that the security situation in Iraq is still precarious. We reiterate that any resolution to the conflict in Iraq must include an all-inclusive political process and national reconciliation and constructive dialogue with all neighbouring States.

In that regard, we welcome the conference on Iraq that is soon to be held in Istanbul and attended by its neighbours. The role of regional actors cannot be overemphasized, and my delegation supports all efforts aimed at addressing the violence and the issue of internally displaced persons and refugees. Regional cooperation is necessary for ensuring stability not only in Iraq, but in the entire region.

The continued humanitarian crisis is cause for serious concern and requires urgent collective attention. If unresolved, the issue of internally displaced persons and refugees could have dire consequences for the country and indeed the entire region.

We were disturbed by reports of activities by military contractors that have resulted in the deaths of innocent Iraqi civilians. We therefore once again call upon all those involved in Iraq to exercise extreme caution and for tighter regulations governing the actions of private security companies.

It should be noted that the recent human rights report of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) indicated that UNAMI shares the view of the International Committee of the Red Cross that

"private military firms must respect international humanitarian law and that the increasing recourse to their services 'risks eroding the fundamental distinction between civilians and combatants'". (UNAMI, Human Rights Report, 1 April-30 June 2007, para. 22)

Resolution 1770 (2007) bears testimony to the determination of the international community to assist the Iraqi people in moving beyond the current crisis. My delegation strongly supports an expanded United Nations role in Iraq, in line with our commitment to multilateralism and conflict resolution. The United Nations has a particularly important role to play with regard to national reconciliation in Iraq. As the Secretary-General indicated in his report, the United Nations not only enjoys good relations with all parties across the political spectrum in Iraq, but also has the advantage of relying on past best practices gained from operating in other global conflicts. However, with regard to a more direct role of the United Nations, as resolution 1770 (2007) itself implies, an expanded role can only be realized as "circumstances permit" (*resolution 1770 (2007), para. 2*). The safety of United Nations personnel must be an overriding consideration.

We reiterate that, notwithstanding the events that led to the current situation, the Security Council has a responsibility to ensure that the powers granted to the Multinational Force in Iraq are exercised in a manner consistent with the decisions of the Security Council, that Iraq's natural resources and the funds in the Development Fund for Iraq are used for the benefit of

the Iraqi people and that international law and human rights laws are upheld and respected by all parties.

Mr. Biaboroh-Iboro (Congo) (*spoke in French*): My delegation thanks you, Mr. President, for having organized this meeting on Iraq relating to the work assigned to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI). We would also like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for the briefing that he gave on the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 1770 (2007).

A perusal of that report provides a review of the overall situation in Iraq, with signs of hope but also — and primarily — areas of great concern. In fact, Iraq remains a country where violence reigns, fuelling insecurity with tragic consequences for the daily lives of people and increasing the phenomenon of internally displaced persons and refugees flowing to neighbouring countries and further. It is urgent for Iraqi authorities, who hold the primary responsibility for protecting their people, to take appropriate measures to reduce that violence in order for the decline in the number of casualties noted in September not become a distant memory.

My delegation nevertheless welcomes the ceasefire by the Mahdi army and the alliance of the Sunni insurgents against Al Qaida, which has contributed, even if only minimally, to a reduction in the violence. As emphasized by the Secretary-General in his report, the challenge will be “transform these military-political developments into a basis for national reconciliation.” (S/2007/608, para. 65)

National dialogue must continue in Iraq without complacency, but also without exclusion, in order to meet the challenge of violence and insecurity and roll back the threat of civil war, which has for so long hovered over the country. That effort, which must be led by both political and religious Iraqi authorities, must also be strongly supported by the international community, which must not let its assistance flag in that regard.

We are grateful to the Multinational Force, which is carrying out a dangerous task in extreme conditions, as just reported to us by the delegation of the United States. However, we call on the Force to take into particular consideration the repeated instances of civilian casualties in its operations, so as not to lose the hard-won support of the Iraqi people.

The same concept must be applied to private armies that are not controlled by the Iraqi Government. In that context, we welcome the adoption of resolution 1770 (2007) of 10 August, which has broadened the mandate of UNAMI and the involvement of the United Nations in coordinating tasks to rebuild Iraq in all areas.

Congo notes the specific measures called for by the United Nations to follow up on resolution 1770 (2007). The acknowledged experience of the United Nations is incomparable in important areas such as political and institutional assistance, in particular in promoting political dialogue and electoral assistance, economic development with a concerted implementation of the International Compact with Iraq, the protection of human rights, humanitarian aid and legal and judicial assistance. There is no doubt that that experience will make a great contribution to rebuilding Iraq, which we all want to see unified, democratic, prosperous, sovereign and at peace with itself and its neighbours. In that regard, the constructive commitment of neighbouring countries and other countries in the region, as suggested by the Secretary-General, remains vital to ensuring the stability of Iraq, and my delegation encourages that vision.

In conclusion, my delegation would call for solidarity on the part of Member States of our Organization in supporting both financial and logistic resources for Iraq in its difficult task of reconstruction.

Finally, we are pleased with the appointment of a new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and wish him much success in his difficult work.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): I would like to join the previous speakers in thanking Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for his briefing. I also take this opportunity to extend our thanks to Mr. Ashraf Qazi for the outstanding work he has done in and for Iraq in his previous capacity of Special Representative for Iraq, as well as to all involved staff of the United Nations and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). I also thank United States Ambassador Khalilzad for his report on behalf of the countries making up the Multinational Force, among them my own country, Slovakia.

As we have heard in the briefing, Iraq continues to face many challenges, with the security situation on the ground remaining highly complex. We regret and

deplore the continuing high level of violence in Iraq and its devastating effects on almost every aspect of life. It remains a source of our constant concern. We strongly condemn all those acts of violence and call for additional efforts and measures to improve the security situation, the protection of civilians and the overall humanitarian conditions, which are truly alarming, as we heard in the briefing by Mr. Pascoe.

Nevertheless, encouraging developments and initiatives have been taking place at national, regional and international levels recently. We believe that those concerted efforts are vital in assisting Iraq to bring about stability, security and prosperity in the country.

In this respect, the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1770 (2007) in August, renewing and extending the mandate of UNAMI, is a significant and welcome step. Slovakia supports a strong United Nations presence and expanded mandate in Iraq to help that country in its transition towards stability, democracy, the rule of law and economic prosperity. We are convinced that increased United Nations assistance, strengthened presence and expanded role will make possible further advances in genuine political dialogue, national reconciliation, economic reform, respect for human rights and the rule of law in the country. We hope the Iraqi leadership will use this assistance to achieve a sustainable solution to the crisis in Iraq.

I would like to use this opportunity to reaffirm my country's support for a secure, stable, democratic and prosperous Iraq and to reiterate our commitments to this goal. In this regard, Slovakia also reaffirms its unambiguous support for an active United Nations engagement and role in implementing the International Compact with Iraq. We are encouraged by the conclusions of the mid-year progress report, which highlighted significant achievements in many sectors despite the difficult security situation.

We also welcome the establishment of the Compact secretariat as an agency of the Government of Iraq, which will facilitate the practical implementation of Compact plans and activities on the ground. As a member of the European Union (EU), Slovakia expresses its readiness to participate actively and constructively in common EU efforts to promote and implement Compact priorities.

We fully share the view that the regional actors, mainly Iraq's immediate neighbours, could and should

play a more active role in promoting Iraq's peace and stability. That would benefit not only Iraq, but also its neighbours in turn, as well as the wider region. We agree with Mr. Pascoe that constructive regional engagement and contributions to the success of Iraq's stabilization remain instrumental and are in the interest of all Iraq's neighbours. We are therefore looking forward to the next expanded meeting of Iraq's neighbours, to be held in Istanbul early next month. We hope that meeting will further enhance a process of regional confidence-building through concrete dialogue and practical cooperation.

At the same time, we continue to believe that the active engagement and full responsibility of the Government of Iraq in the process of transition and stabilization remain decisive. To put it simply, the Iraqi ownership of this process is truly fundamental. Without it, it will be difficult to succeed in tackling the many challenges faced by this country and its people.

In this regard, we strongly encourage the Government of Iraq, together with all relevant parties and leaders in the country, to make substantial progress on the promotion of political compromise and genuine national reconciliation. It is imperative to act responsibly and work across ethnic, sectarian and political divides.

In conclusion, I would like to underline that it is important that all possible efforts be undertaken to address the increasing humanitarian suffering of a large number of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons. Appropriate measures are also needed to alleviate the heavy burden carried by neighbouring countries, in particular Jordan and Syria, in this connection. The role and activities of such bodies as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Organization for Migration remain important and highly required. However, here again — and especially in this particular case — we see how imperative it is to promote successful national dialogue in the reconciliation among all constituencies and communities in Iraq. Only such an approach can effectively prevent further outflow of people and enable Iraqi refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes.

Finally, we also would like to join others in wishing the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General all the success in his new mission.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): I would like to join colleagues in thanking Under-Secretary-General Pascoe for his presentation of the Secretary-General's report. That is the first report on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) since the adoption of resolution 1770 (2007). I would also like to thank Ambassador Khalilzad for his own presentation on behalf of the Multinational Force in Iraq, of which the United Kingdom remains the second-largest contributor.

I would like to echo the Secretary-General's thanks to Mr. Ashraf Qazi for his tireless work as Special Representative for Iraq over the last three years. We look forward to working closely with the new Special Representative as he takes steps to implement the enhanced role, as set out in resolution 1770 (2007).

The Secretary-General reminded us this morning of the point in his report that there is now an opportunity that should not be missed. Over the last eight months, as set out by General Petraeus in his testimony to the United States Congress and by Ambassador Khalilzad today, the Iraqi security forces and the Multinational Force have had significant and positive impact on security in Iraq, with sectarian violence falling and successes against Al-Qaida.

These are very welcome developments, and they need to be followed up by political steps towards national reconciliation, driven by Iraqis and supported and facilitated as necessary by the international community. We encourage Iraqi leaders to build on the agreements reached during the leadership conference in August. In particular, we are keen to see further meetings of the Prime Minister, the President and his two Vice-Presidents to reach agreements on key political issues. We welcome the priority the new Special Representative has said he will give to promoting national dialogue, as Mr. Pascoe set out today.

Iraq is not going to succeed without the full backing of its neighbours and States in the region. I echo what colleagues have said in welcoming the proposal made by the Secretary-General, at the high-level meeting on Iraq last month, to establish a secretariat for regional cooperation. We hope that this can be discussed further at the Iraq neighbours meeting in Istanbul in November, where the Special Representative's participation will be very welcome. We hope that the meeting will approve the Secretary-General's proposal. The sooner the secretariat is

established, the sooner the principle of sustained regional engagement and cooperation can have a beneficial, practical effect.

The international community has to play its part, too. Key partners have reiterated their commitment to Iraq within the expanded neighbours' process and at the high-level meeting. This week, the European Union committed itself to more active support for Iraq and the United Nations presence.

The United Kingdom remains steadfast in its support of Iraq through our military, diplomatic and development efforts. Following discussions with the Government of Iraq and our Multinational Force partners, Prime Minister Gordon Brown set out the United Kingdom's military and economic plans in the south of Iraq, where we have lead-nation responsibility within the Multinational Force.

As a result of the progress we have made in training Iraqi security forces, and based on conditions on the ground, we expect that provincial Iraqi control will be established in Basra province in the next two months. That would complete the transfer of responsibility for security to Iraqi control in the four southern Iraqi provinces that have been under British responsibility. British forces will then focus on training and mentoring the Iraqi army and police, securing supply routes and policing the Iraq-Iran border, while maintaining the ability to come to the assistance of Iraqi security forces when called upon. Subject to military advice nearer the time, we plan to move to a second stage of overwatch in the spring of 2008, when we will have fewer troops, with a more limited reintervention capacity, largely focused on training and mentoring.

In parallel, we will be supporting the economic reconstruction work announced by Prime Minister al-Maliki in July, including by helping to establish a new Basra development commission, strengthening the engagement of the international private sector in the south and providing advice on investment and growth.

International support for provincial authorities is important as they coordinate projects in the south that will have a lasting effect. We are working closely with the United Nations to advise on and facilitate the establishment of a United Nations presence in Basra over the coming months. I would draw attention to the request for financial and logistical assistance made by the Secretary-General, as set out by Mr. Pascoe today,

which are needed to allow the United Nations to implement its role fully. I hope that Member States will consider what support they can provide.

As I said at the beginning, there is an opportunity now for Iraq and for us all that we must not miss.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Ghana.

My delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for the comprehensive report (S/2007/608) he has submitted pursuant to resolution 1770 (2007). We would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe for his introduction and update on the report. We also wish to thank Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for his briefing on the Multinational Force in Iraq (MNF-I).

By resolution 1770 (2007), the Council expanded the role of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) in the political and reconciliation processes, while the Multinational Force maintained its lead role in maintaining peace and security in the country. The situation in Iraq remains challenging and the degree of success in UNAMI's work will largely depend on the willingness of Iraqis themselves to bury their differences for the sake of peace. In that regard, Ghana is encouraged by the series of legislative initiatives that the Iraqi leadership announced on 26 August 2007, aimed at breaking the impasse in the political process. We are also encouraged by the effort by the Constitutional Review Committee to submit its final report to the Council of Representatives by the end of this year.

Ghana welcomes the steps taken by the Secretary-General, including his meeting on 22 September 2007 with the participants of the expanded neighbours' meetings — a meeting aimed at mobilizing regional support and cooperation, which are essential in facilitating the full and effective implementation of the mandate of UNAMI — and the progress of the International Compact with Iraq. In that regard, we welcome the establishment of the Compact secretariat, as well as the administrative and technical support being provided on an interim basis by the United Nations, the World Bank and other development partners. My delegation further wishes to underscore the importance of the six-month workplan being developed to streamline the activities and implementation of the International Compact for Iraq.

It is my delegation's expectation that the next expanded meeting of Iraq's neighbours, which is to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, will contribute to the satisfactory resolution of issues relating to energy, refugees and security — among other issues with far-reaching regional and global repercussions.

In the light of recent ethnic tensions along Iraq's borders, Ghana appeals to all sides to exercise restraint, and calls on Iraq's neighbours to continue to play constructive roles in the quest for durable peace in the region.

In conclusion, Ghana remains concerned about the political, security, economic, humanitarian and human rights situation in Iraq. It wishes to commend UNAMI's work in promoting an all-inclusive political dialogue — including its support for the constitutional and electoral processes in Iraq — in order to create an enabling environment for addressing the challenges confronting the people of Iraq. Ultimately peace, reconciliation and unity in Iraq can only be achieved and sustained by Iraqis themselves.

Finally, it is our hope that the collective endeavours of UNAMI, the Multinational Force and neighbouring States will lead to the outcome the people of Iraq and the international community desire, namely, stability, unity and reconciliation in Iraq, in the interest of world peace and security.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting.

At the outset, allow me to express my appreciation to Mr. Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for his presentation. I would also like to thank Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, Permanent Representative of the United States, for his statement on behalf of the Multinational Force.

We have before us the first report (S/2007/608) of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) pursuant to resolution 1770 (2007), which included the expansion of UNAMI's mandate. That expansion has enjoyed wide acceptance in the Iraqi Government, which considers it a reflection of its continuing demands for activating and strengthening the presence of the United Nations in

Iraq. We are confident that the skills, ability, and effectiveness of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Mr. de Mistura, along with his team, will play a major role in the success of UNAMI's efforts in Iraq.

On behalf of the Government of Iraq and my delegation, I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Mr. Qazi for his efforts as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Iraq during the previous period. We wish him continued success in his new position as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Sudan.

The Secretary-General's report presented an account of the major political developments in Iraq, UNAMI's activities, developments in the security situation and the status of the International Reconstruction Funding Facility for Iraq (IRFFI). We support the Secretary-General's valuable remarks at the end of his report. However, we would like to outline a few key aspects related to the main challenges facing Iraq. Those challenges are still present, but their danger has begun to diminish. They impose on the Government and people of Iraq enormous tasks that need to be accomplished.

The first challenge is terrorism and the means to confront it. The security plans carried out by the Iraqi army and the national security forces with the assistance of the Multinational Force have contributed to surrounding the terrorists in separate parts of Iraq. The remnants of Al-Qaida, along with the Saddamists, are suffering continued defeats. That has been clearly reflected in the security situation in Iraq, which has witnessed tangible improvement, and the decline in the levels and number of terrorist activities, along with a significant reduction in the threat of civil war in Iraq.

The second challenge, which is a legacy of the previous regime, is a shattered infrastructure and a weak economy caused by internal and external wars waged by the former regime in Iraq. It was therefore incumbent upon the Government of Iraq to launch ambitious plans for comprehensive reconstruction, to provide the necessary services for the citizens of Iraq and to rebuild the economy on a sound and modern basis that would enable the Iraqi economy to contribute effectively to the international economy. However, Iraq cannot accomplish those goals without the effective assistance of the international community.

The International Compact with Iraq, which was launched at Sharm el-Sheikh in May 2007, plays a significant role in that respect. It has reinforced and strengthened national and international commitments in the political and economic fields, the rule of law, the reinforcement and protection of human rights, and the establishment of democracy. As is well known, the United Nations has a lead role in the Compact.

The third challenge is achieving national reconciliation, and here I would like to refer to the statement made by the Iraqi Prime Minister before the General Assembly on 26 September. He said:

"We think of national reconciliation as a life boat, a perpetual peace project and a safe harbour for the political process and the democratic experience. We also believe that national reconciliation is not the responsibility of the Government alone. It is a collective responsibility held by the political powers, intellectual leaders, religious leaders, the educated, civil society organizations and all the active powers in the Iraqi arena. National reconciliation is the strategic choice that has saved our country from slipping into the pit of a sectarian war that was planned by the enemies of freedom and democracy after they blew up the tomb of the two Askari imams in Samarra." (*A/62/PV.6, p.31*)

Despite those challenges, the Iraqi Government is continuing the reconstruction process in different fields. The budget for 2008 has been set. It is the largest budget in Iraq's modern history. A sum of \$10.5 billion has been allocated to investment programmes, and the budget for the provinces has increased by 25 per cent relative to last year's budget. The investment law, which will transform the Iraqi economy from a centralized to a market economy, has been approved, and the Iraqi Government has completed a draft oil and gas bill that will secure the fair distribution of Iraq's oil revenues. Furthermore, the Government is also working towards strengthening the purchasing power of Iraqi citizens and raising the salaries of current and retired employees. It is also preserving the stability of Iraq's currency and preventing its fluctuation against other currencies.

With regard to political reconciliation, the Iraqi Government has completed an accountability and justice bill that it has presented to the Council of

Representatives as a substitute for the de-Baathification law. Tens of thousands of officials of the former Government have been returned to their former Government positions regardless of their political affiliation.

As stated in the Secretary-General's report, there is concern about the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Iraq due to the flow of refugees to neighbouring countries and the internal displacement of people escaping terrorist, militia and criminal activities. The Iraqi Government has been working hard to fulfil its responsibilities in that regard and to create suitable conditions for the return of refugees and internally displaced individuals to their homes by confronting illegal activists regardless of their sectarian or political affiliation.

The improvement of the security situation in several unstable areas has contributed to the return of a large number of families to their homes. However, the problem continues and requires support and large contributions from concerned international organizations, foremost among which are the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the World Health Organization, UNICEF and UNESCO. Those organizations need to assist the refugees and the host countries alike, and the Iraqi Government has pledged to offer its assistance to those countries as well.

Regarding human rights, the main challenge for the Iraqi people is terrorist activities and crimes that target innocent civilians. We are pleased to see positive signals in the Secretary-General's report on the cooperation of the concerned Iraqi authorities and the authorities of the Iraqi Kurdistan region with United Nations human rights officials. We hope that the upcoming visit of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on torture and other inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment will achieve positive results in reinforcing and protecting human rights in Iraq.

Pursuant to resolution 1770 (2007), UNAMI's mandate covers critical and essential issues related to the present and future of the new Iraq. The most important of those are UNAMI's role in national dialogue and reconciliation, the requirements of holding elections and referendums, and assisting in constitutional review, in addition to achieving compromise regarding internal borders and facilitating

regional dialogue concerning the issues of border security, energy and refugees. There is no doubt that those issues are critical and should be addressed with specific mechanisms and with the prior approval of the constitutionally elected Iraqi Government, as stated in the letter of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of 6 August, contained in document S/2007/481, which refers to the Iraqi Government's desire to expand UNAMI's mandate. Without doubt, the effective implementation of that mandate requires the return of the specialized agencies, funds and programmes to work in Iraq and to increase their staff in the field.

We look forward to Iraq's playing an active role in achieving stability and security in the Middle East. Iraq aspires to be an arena for all parties to engage in dialogue, rather than a space for settling issues. Towards that end, we initiated the neighbouring countries' meeting and hosted the American-Iranian dialogue in Baghdad because stability and security in Iraq positively affect the security and stability of the whole region and contribute to the enhancement of international peace and security.

To achieve that goal, Iraq must be capable of advancing itself and should be able to shake off the legacy of the former regime and be liberated from its financial burdens. Iraq is still suffering from the heavy burden of compensating for the Kuwait invasion by the Saddam regime, while it remains in need of the support of the international community and the donor countries. Iraq has paid large sums amounting to more than \$22 billion dollars, and it continues to pay.

In that regard, I would like to refer to the letters of the Prime Minister of 24 June and of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of 15 August addressed to the Security Council concerning that issue. The letters request the Council at the present time to suspend the deductions and to reduce the proportion of deductions to a level that Iraq can maintain given its current situation. That would be achieved in coordination with the Compensation Committee until the matter can be addressed at an international conference or resolved bilaterally between Iraq and the countries concerned. We hope that the Council responds positively to Iraq's request.

The President: There are no more speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.



Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5764th meeting

Monday, 22 October 2007, 10 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Christian	(Ghana)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. Bockel
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Qahtani
	Russian Federation	Mr. Rogachev
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . .	Sir John Sawers
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott

Agenda

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Pakistan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Amil (Pakistan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council condemns in the strongest terms the bomb attacks that occurred in Karachi, Pakistan, on 18 October 2007, causing numerous deaths and injuries, and expresses its deep sympathy and condolences to the victims of this heinous act of terrorism and their families, and to the people and the Government of Pakistan.

"The Security Council underlines the need to bring perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of this reprehensible act of terrorism to justice, and urges all States, in accordance with their obligations under international law and resolution 1373 (2001) and consistent with resolution 1624 (2005), to cooperate actively with the Pakistani authorities in this regard.

"The Security Council reaffirms that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever committed.

"The Security Council further reaffirms the need to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts. The Council reminds States that they must ensure that any measures taken to combat terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law.

"The Security Council reiterates its determination to combat all forms of terrorism, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2007/39.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present state of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.



Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5765th meeting

Monday, 22 October 2007, 10.20 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Christian	(Ghana)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Du Xiacong
	Congo	Mr. Okio
	France	Mr. Bockel
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Spatafora
	Panama	Mr. Soler Torrijos
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Fourteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations
Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2007/593)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Fourteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2007/593)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Burkina Faso in which he requests that his delegation be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the Facilitator of the Ouagadougou Agreement to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Djibrill Y. Bassolé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire in which he requests that he be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Abou Moussa, Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/593, which contains the fourteenth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Abou Moussa, Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Moussa: The fourteenth progress report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/593), which is before Council members, provides an update on major developments in Côte d'Ivoire since the last report, of 14 May 2007, including the status of implementation of key steps of the peace process. In anticipation of the review by the Security Council of the mandate and troop level of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the current consultations provided for in Security Council resolution 1765 (2007), the report notes that none of the benchmarks set to consider an adjustment of the mandate and troop level of UNOCI has been totally met, namely the dismantling and disarmament of the militias, the disarmament of combatants and the redeployment of State administration throughout the country.

As the Secretary-General's report speaks for itself, my presentation will focus solely on the most recent developments since its publication and on the underlying risks and challenges. I will also dwell on the emerging prospects for accelerating the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement.

The continued commitment of the Ivorian leaders to take ownership of the peace process has yielded some progress in performing the key tasks provided for in the Ouagadougou political Agreement. In assuming their primary responsibility for restoring lasting peace and stability to Côte d'Ivoire, the Ivorians have also sought to develop a common understanding of the challenges facing the process and to define consensual ways of addressing them with the continued support of the Facilitator.

With regard to military and security-related matters, the gradual dismantling of the zone of confidence has reached an advance stage with the deployment of mixed brigades by the integrated command centre (ICC), the deactivation of the remaining UNOCI checkpoints and the subsequent establishment of the 17 observation posts. As a result, the UNOCI force is in the process of redeploying its troops so as to best assist the Ivorian Government in implementing the military and security aspects of the Ouagadougou political Agreement. The overall security situation remains generally stable, although fragile, owing to the improving political climate.

On the political front, the mobile court operation was relaunched on 25 September as called for by the second meeting of the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee held in Ouagadougou on 4 September. As an important prelude to the identification process, this operation was also in line with the Facilitator's pressing call on the Ivorian leaders to move from symbolic gestures to taking concrete steps towards performing the key tasks provided for in the Ouagadougou political Agreement. Of the 25 mobile court teams planned for the first phase of the operation, 20 have been deployed and are operational. As at 18 October, nearly 3,400 applications for duplicates of birth certificates have been received, of which 3,044 have been granted.

The turnout at the mobile court hearings, which had initially been very low, is now improving gradually owing to the enhanced sensitization campaign.

As to the restoration of State authority throughout the country, the Government and the Forces nouvelles authorities have been addressing the lingering security, logistical and financial constraints. That has allowed for the redeployment of 22 préfets, 27 secretaries-general and 107 sous-préfets as of 18 October.

Meanwhile, in keeping with its new mandate under Security Council resolution 1765 (2007), UNOCI continues to support the Ivorian Government in implementing the key aspects of the Ouagadougou political Agreement. In addition to providing logistical, technical and security support, the mission is finalizing the establishment of a certification cell within the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Practical modalities for the certification of the electoral process will be defined in the near future, in consultation with the Facilitator.

(spoke in French)

Despite the Government's tireless efforts to implement the Ouagadougou Agreement, the peace process continues to face a number of serious challenges. Restructuring the Ivorian armed forces remains a crucial task, aimed at consolidating and strengthening the reunification of the country. To that end, the Facilitator has conducted in-depth consultations with the chiefs of staff of the Ivorian armed forces and of the Forces nouvelles, as well as with the commanders of the Forces nouvelles zone and the commanders of the impartial forces. The Facilitator intends to submit, in the near future, concrete proposals to President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Soro related to the issue of ranks and quotas for Forces nouvelles elements that will be part of the unified army. We hope that that will facilitate the launching of the process of dismantling the militias and disarming the combatants. Indeed, the ceremonies held to symbolize the disarmament and dismantlement of armed militias, at Guiglo on 19 May, and to symbolize the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants, at Bouaké on 30 July, have not been followed up by the formal launching of those processes.

As the Secretary-General noted in his report, donors have proved generous in their support for the Ouagadougou Agreement. That support could facilitate efforts to accelerate the completion of essential tasks such as DDR, the pre-identification and identification process, preparation for the elections and post-conflict recovery programmes. However, in order to encourage donors to maintain their support for the implementation process, it is essential that the Ivorian parties send strong and unequivocal messages regarding their resolve to meet the deadlines that they set for accomplishing the essential tasks set out in the Ouagadougou Agreement.

(spoke in English)

The very positive partnership between the United Nations and the Facilitator, and the recent appointment in Abidjan of the Facilitator's Special Representative, constitute encouraging prospects for accelerating the process of implementing the Ouagadougou Peace Agreement. Regular consultations between the UNOCI leadership and the Facilitator serve the purpose of identifying emerging risks and challenges and of exploring practical ways to address them in a proactive

fashion. Through his active engagement with the Ivorian leaders, the Special Representative of the Facilitator has been encouraging them to comply with their obligations under the Peace Agreement. In keeping with paragraph 10 of Security Council resolution 1765 (2007), and as requested by the Facilitator in a recent letter to the Secretary-General, UNOCI has been providing security support to the Special Representative of the Facilitator so as to facilitate his movements and activities.

Similarly, efforts are under way to develop synergy between the Facilitator's arbitration and UNOCI's validation and certification functions. The idea is to define criteria for ensuring the effective performance of those functions. It is hoped that the third meeting of the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee will provide a useful opportunity to define a clear-cut timetable for performing the remaining key tasks.

In conclusion, the Ivorian leaders' continued commitment to take the lead in restoring peace to their country is a key factor for effective implementation of the Ouagadougou Peace Agreement. However, if the peace process is to become irreversible, special attention should be paid to addressing the outstanding political and military issues that are linked closely to the performance of other key aspects of the Agreement. It is also essential to develop pragmatic arrangements between the national stakeholders and their international partners in the context of a new partnership for peace.

I wish to recall that, as pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report, the overall peace process and the improved security situation will remain fragile and vulnerable to reversals unless they are underpinned by concrete progress, especially in the performance of the crucial tasks provided for in the Ouagadougou political Agreement.

The President: I thank Mr. Moussa for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Djibrill Y. Bassolé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, who will speak on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso and Facilitator of the Ouagadougou Agreement.

Mr. Bassolé (Burkina Faso) (spoke in French): At a time when the Security Council is preparing to

consider the situation in the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, it is a distinct honour for me to take the floor before the Council on behalf of President Blaise Compaoré, Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Facilitator of the direct inter-Ivorian dialogue, to inform members of his assessment of the progress made in the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. It remains understood that that facilitation is being carried out under the sponsorship of the African Union.

I should like to take this opportunity to express once again to the Security Council the Facilitator's deep gratitude and great satisfaction with regard to the trust that has been placed in him through the endorsement of the Ouagadougou political Agreement, signed under his auspices on 4 March 2007 by President Laurent Gbagbo and Mr. Guillaume Soro. I also wish to express to the Council and to the entire United Nations system the Facilitator's sincere thanks for the multifaceted support provided to him as he has carried out his sensitive mission of following up on the Ouagadougou political Agreement. Here, I must pay a well-deserved tribute to the international community as a whole, particularly the forces of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the French troops of Operation Licorne and all donors involved in Côte d'Ivoire.

The Ouagadougou political Agreement has led to a fundamental change in the political situation in Côte d'Ivoire. In addition to a general calming of the political and social environment, it has made it possible to reunify the country by removing the zone of confidence and redeploying the administration throughout the national territory. Now, military and political tensions have given way to a genuine dialogue, which is gradually taking root among the various Ivorian political forces and opening the way for national reconciliation.

With regard to the programmes aimed at the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatant forces and the disarmament and dismantlement of armed militias, provided for in section III of the Ouagadougou political Agreement, it must be recognized that they have not yet been satisfactorily carried out. Nevertheless, we can welcome the fact that the conditions for that achievement are gradually being put in place. Thus, the establishment on 16 March 2007 of the integrated command centre, which is responsible for

implementing the military aspects of the Agreement, is a precondition for the execution of those programmes. Likewise, the ceremony held in Guiglo on 19 May 2007 to symbolize the destruction of weapons surrendered by armed militias and the flame-of-peace ceremony held on 30 July in Bouaké, by virtue of their symbolic nature, have resulted in an easing of political and military tensions, which has also promoted the launching of those programmes.

At present, the former combatant forces are no longer using their weapons in the political debate. People and goods are circulating freely throughout the national territory. The Facilitator is working to establish the modalities for military integration — quotas and ranks — and to ensure the beginning of the civic service in the near future.

The implementation of the major operations provided for under the Ouagadougou political Agreement, such as identification and the electoral process, have been delayed with regard to the initial timeline set out in the 4 March Agreement. However, we must point out that this delay is no way a reflection of bad will from the parties or Ivorian political actors in the implementation of the Agreement.

This general delay can essentially be explained by the complexity of the different operations, the lack of necessary financial resources for their implementation and administrative and technical difficulties inherent in the post-conflict situation of Côte d'Ivoire. The security problems, illustrated specifically by the 29 June attack against Prime Minister Guillaume Soro, are also obstacles to the implementation of the Ouagadougou political Agreement according to the initial timeline. The Government of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee and UNOCI are working on removing the obstacles that mark the process of emerging from the crisis.

The Facilitator welcomes the fact that the peace process that started on 4 March 2007 has been warmly embraced on a national level, including by political actors and civil society, the media and the population itself, as can be seen in the many cultural events and different initiatives around the return to peace.

The peace flame ceremony organized in Bouaké on 30 July has, beyond its symbolism, significantly contributed to an easing of national political tensions and the strengthening of national cohesion. Similarly,

the official launching last 25 September of the mobile court hearings, preceded by a redeployment of the magistrates, préfets and sous-préfets in the north of the country, as well as their continuation to date without any obstacles show that we have crossed into a decisive phase in the process of emerging from crisis in Côte d'Ivoire.

The holding on 4 September 2007 of the second meeting of the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee, with the participation of all members of the consultative organ, the establishment of which was supported by resolution 1765 (2007), has given an additional push to the process of implementing the Ouagadougou political Agreement. The same applies to the effective presence of the Special Representative of the Facilitator in Côte d'Ivoire since 10 September 2007.

The activities of the Special Representative of the Facilitator, which deserve to be supported and encouraged, given the scope of the task, will soon be strengthened by the dispatch of a team of experts in different fields that will help him in his daily facilitation, conciliation and mediation tasks. Thus, he will be able to better help the parties to overcome the obstacles and bottlenecks in implementing the Ouagadougou political Agreement and help in finding solutions to the various difficulties that might arise in that process.

The Facilitator's work covers the entire scope of the task that remains to be completed to achieve peace in Côte d'Ivoire. He is aware of the multiple difficulties that beset the different operations provided for by the Ouagadougou Agreement. However, the Facilitator continues to have faith in the Ivorian parties and their ability to overcome their differences to consolidate peace and national reconciliation.

Côte d'Ivoire still needs, I am convinced, the support of the international community and especially of the Security Council to complete the peace process. That is why the Facilitator believes that the United Nations should continue to play an important role in Côte d'Ivoire's process of emerging from conflict, specifically through the certification functions of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and reassuring activities of the impartial forces of UNOCI and Licorne.

In this regard, the Facilitator welcomes the appointment of a new Special Representative of the

Secretary-General, Mr. Choi Young-jin. I am sure that this appointment will contribute in giving a new dynamic to the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. I would like to express my congratulations to Mr. Choi and my wishes for every success in this new mission. I also assure him that the Facilitator is available to work with him.

The signatories of the Ouagadougou political Agreement have agreed to establish an institutional framework to implement the Agreement, in order to organize presidential elections that will be open, free and transparent, according to the agreed timeline covering the period from March to December 2008. The Facilitator requests that the Security Council accompany commitments undertaken by President Laurent Gbagbo and Prime Minister Guillaume Soro, so that they can create the conditions for a democratic, fair and peaceful election. The Facilitator also wishes that during the first semester of 2008 the operations linked to identification and voter registration processes can be completed according to a new timeline that will take into account the technical and organizational needs.

Aware of the relatively fragile character of what has been gained by the implementation of the Ouagadougou political Agreement and the difficulties of all types that intervene in the peace process, the Facilitator will push Ivorian actors and their technical and financial partners to carry out essential operations to guarantee credible elections, in particular, the identification of populations, the establishment of a reliable electoral list, disarmament, and security for the electoral process.

The certification function that from now on will be carried out through all stages of the electoral process by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, as well as the arbitration function that the Facilitator will undertake with his support, will reinforce confidence and support of Ivorians, upon whom the building of peace and national reconciliation depends.

In view of the efforts already undertaken on the ground and the sustained will of Ivorian political actors, the Security Council should examine with special attention any requests from the Ivorian parties with respect to peacebuilding and national reconciliation.

In spite of the slowness in the implementation of the Ouagadougou political Agreement, and in spite of the difficulties that have come up here and there in the process of emerging from the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, hope for true, lasting peace in this country is within reach. Ivorian political actors will absolutely have to fully live up to their respective responsibilities in carrying out the peace process. It is also necessary for the international community to support the Ivorian efforts to find a permanent way out of the crisis.

I can assure the Council that the Facilitator will spare no effort in continuing to accompany Ivorians toward peace. He counts on the decisive support of the United Nations and in particular that of the Security Council.

The President: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make comments or ask questions in response to the briefings that we have just heard.

On behalf of the Council, I wish to extend a warm welcome to the Secretary of State for Cooperation and Francophony of France, Mr. Jean-Marie Bockel.

Mr. Bockel (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank all those who have made statements. In particular, I would like to welcome the presence of the Minister of Burkina Faso, Mr. Bassolé, and tell him that I listened carefully to his very illuminating presentation of the peace process.

I will also take advantage of this opportunity to congratulate Burkina Faso on its election to the Security Council for the 2008-2009 period. I have no doubt that Burkina Faso will fully play its role there in the continuing peace efforts that it has conducted in recent years in its subregion.

In this respect, I wish to pay tribute to President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, who fosters on a daily basis the sensitive dialogue between the Ivorian parties. It is very important that a senior representative of his country has come today to present its vision to the Security Council and, through the Council, to the entire international community. This debate is an opportunity to show once again our full support for the Facilitator and the Ouagadougou process. The Security Council has endorsed the political agreement concluded among the Ivorians and has referred to it on

a constant basis. But we need to forcefully reiterate this support; this agreement is a real chance for Côte d'Ivoire to emerge from the crisis. There is quite simply no alternative to it today.

The process formalized between 4 and 6 March 2007 by the signing of the Ouagadougou political Agreement and the supplementary agreement have led to initial progress, the most visible of which, after the deployment of the 6 mixed units of the two parties defence and security forces, is probably the dismantling of the zone of confidence, which the Minister has mentioned, and its replacement by a series of United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) observation posts. Also, significant symbolic gestures have been made by the Ivorian parties to mark the launch of the mobile courts, the start of disarming militias, the restoration of State authority throughout the country and the establishment of an integrated command centre so that the formerly competing security forces can be better coordinated.

But this progress is not enough. As Minister Bassolé indicated frankly a moment ago, and as the Secretary-General notes in his latest report, which Mr. Abou Moussa just presented to us very clearly, the parties have fallen seriously behind in the implementation of the Agreement. This is worrying. Admittedly, no date is set in stone, but there has to be a clear and irreversible prospect of open, free, fair and transparent presidential and legislative elections, in accordance with international standards. This objective presupposes that the Ivorian parties abide by their commitments and establish a new timetable that will lead Côte d'Ivoire towards an emergence from the crisis.

In the face of a long and complex crisis, we need, as the Secretary-General has noted: to resolve the thorny question of ranks, which is paralysing any real integration of the defence forces; to ensure an effective disarmament of militias, which is a prerequisite for their dismantling; to combat arms proliferation, without which there is no security; and, at the same time, to ensure greater respect for the rule of law.

In the very short term, however, as the Minister has observed, priority must be given to the process of population identification. I stress this point because of the specific role of the United Nations in this regard. Indeed, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General must carry out all stages of the electoral process,

on which the return to civilian peace is based. In this respect, I should like to welcome the appointment of Mr. Choi as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and I pay tribute to Mr. Abou Moussa for his interim work, which he has discharged with competence and determination.

I stress the crucial nature of the task of certification which the Council has entrusted to the Special Representative in resolution 1765 (2007). Each of the stages in the electoral process is important. Without proper identification, how can we ensure inclusion of all the citizens who wish to appear on the electoral rolls, and thus how can we ensure the credibility of the subsequent stages in the electoral process? I do not underestimate the real difficulties of this process, which is extremely sensitive, but which is the way to resolve this crisis. Côte d'Ivoire does, however, have in the Ouagadougou Agreement an effective tool: the mobile court hearings. It is urgent that the parties, as the Facilitator has stated, make rapid progress in the large-scale deployment of these mobile court hearings, which must have the personnel agreed on and receive the necessary protection.

What can the Security Council do, and, more generally speaking, what can the United Nations do? It is not the Council's role to state, here in New York, how the many questions that the Facilitator is trying to untangle can be resolved in all their details; the road map was set out by the Ivorians themselves in Ouagadougou. But it is certainly the responsibility of the Security Council, through its support for the Facilitator's efforts, to ensure that both parties fulfil their commitments and see that the process is successfully completed.

It is essential that the Security Council maintains its support for Côte d'Ivoire in this transition period. France, for its part, will continue to act to this end, as it has done all along. Like the Secretary-General, France considers it necessary to preserve the mandate of the impartial forces and the level of UNOCI troops, as defined in July. This mandate, while adapting their role, makes it possible for them to maintain their capacity to react promptly in case of an attack on the peace process.

My delegation has presented a draft press statement along these lines, and we hope that the Council will be able to adopt it today.

The Ivorian peace process has a chance of succeeding. We must seize this opportunity fully by supporting the Facilitator's actions and by showing ourselves to be vigilant in terms of the commitments that the Ivorian parties assumed in his presence. A fresh impetus, as called for by the Secretary-General, is essential today. It is not out of reach. The Ivorians can count on the Security Council and, allow me to say so here, on France to support their efforts to this end.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): South Africa wishes to welcome His Excellency Mr. Djibrill Bassolé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, in his capacity as representative of the Facilitator of the Ivorian peace process, President Blaise Compaoré, and thank him for his briefing here today. May I also use this opportunity to express my delegation's sincere appreciation for the continuing and active facilitation role of President Compaoré. I would be remiss if I did not also congratulate Burkina Faso on its election as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the period 2008-2009. We look forward to working together with Burkina Faso on this Council.

My delegation also wishes to thank Mr. Abou Moussa, Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Côte d'Ivoire for his continued dedication, and the work of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), under his leadership, as well as for the briefing to this Council.

The signing of the Ouagadougou political Agreement on 4 March 2007 was historic. It led the Ivorian parties, with the assistance of their neighbours, particularly President Compaoré of Burkina Faso, to reach an agreement and create ownership for resolving an issue that had baffled the international community for many years. The Secretary-General has described the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement as a "unique turning point" in the Ivorian peace process. "Ownership of the peace process", the Secretary-General has stated, "imposes a unique responsibility on the Ivorian parties to implement the Ouagadougou Agreement in full and in good faith". Since the signing of the Agreement, it has often been pointed out that some of the processes and obligations that the Parties had to carry out in terms of the Ouagadougou Agreement have not yet materialized. South Africa, however, remains optimistic that all the parties in Côte d'Ivoire have demonstrated the political will to move the process forward and to adhere to the agreed-upon time frames. We agree with Prime Minister Soro, who

has reassured everyone that his commitment to preserving the credibility of the electoral process is more important than adhering to strict deadlines.

South Africa welcomes the setting up of the Integrated Command Centre, the establishment of the six mixed brigade units and the launch of the mobile courts, as well as the initial work done with regard to the identification and registration of voters, the disarmament and dismantling of militias, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and the restoration of State authority throughout the country. My delegation is particularly mindful of the technical, logistical and capacity challenges that hamper the efforts of the parties to fully adhere to the timetable for the implementation of such difficult technical processes as the dismantling of militias, the cantonment of former fighting forces, the redeployment of State authority and the deployment of the mobile courts. Nevertheless, we are confident that, with the assistance of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, the support of the international community and the political commitment of the parties, those challenges are not insurmountable.

The recently held donors' round table is demonstrative of the goodwill, commitment and desire of the international community to see peace, prosperity and development return to Côte d'Ivoire. We welcome the pledge of \$388 million in support of the peace process made by the international community. What is now required is for those pledges to be honoured. South Africa calls on the international and donor communities to continue their material and technical support for the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and for the full implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement.

In conclusion, my delegation shares the view of the Secretary-General expressed in his most recent report, in which he states that

"The positive political atmosphere that has prevailed in Côte d'Ivoire since the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement gives the Ivorian parties the opportunity to make concrete progress towards its implementation." (S/2007/593, para. 59)

We also agree with the Secretary-General that the momentum generated by the signing of the Agreement should not be lost and that

"The overall peace process and the improved security situation will remain fragile and vulnerable to reversals unless it is underpinned by concrete progress". (*ibid*)

South Africa therefore commits itself to working with the leaders of Côte d'Ivoire and the international community in ensuring that the promises of the Ouagadougou Agreement come to fruition and that peace, stability and prosperity once again return to the people of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to welcome the presence among us of Mr. Djibrill Bassolé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, in his capacity as representative of the Facilitator of the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. Through him, I would also like to congratulate President Blaise Compaoré for his important contribution to peacebuilding in Côte d'Ivoire. I would also like to welcome the presence among us of Jean-Marie Bockel, Secretary of State for Cooperation and la Francophonie of France, as well as to thank Mr. Abou Moussa for his introduction of the report (S/2007/593) of the Secretary-General.

The signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement was a milestone in the process of peaceably transforming Ivorian society. Nevertheless, seven months after that event, we are concerned to note the significant slackening in the initial momentum to implement the Agreement — given that timelines have been extended considerably and we do not yet know when the process will be completed. We are aware of the overall problem of the capacity of national institutions to manage the process and of their need for international support in the areas of logistics and capacity building. In that regard, we would like the underscore the need for support for the Integrated Command Centre and the mixed units. However, we believe that those difficulties should not be an insurmountable obstacle to continuing the peace process.

We are pleased that, despite delays in implementation, the parties in Côte d'Ivoire still have the political will to continue to make progress, as attested to once again following the reprehensible attack against Prime Minister Guillaume Soro. The signals sent out in that connection to Ivorian society point to unwavering commitment to peace and to unity and resolve in the face of violence.

We would like to underscore the valuable support of the financing provided by the international community in the implementation of the Agreement and post-conflict recovery. That positive element provides additional momentum and serves to underscore the responsibility of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to respond to national and international expectations vis-à-vis the meeting of timelines.

Some of the specific tasks to be accomplished urgently include the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, the dismantling of militias, the merging and restructuring of defence and security forces, the re-establishment of State administration throughout the country, the identification of the population and voter registration. The process as a whole should be geared towards the holding of elections as the final component of peacebuilding. In that regard, it is necessary both to establish an exact timeframe for the holding of elections and to emphasize the importance of certifying each stage to ensuring absolute credibility of the process.

My delegation therefore calls on the Facilitator to continue his efforts to speed up the peace process. We also call on regional organizations in Africa, and especially on the Economic Community of West African States, to continue their close cooperation with the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) in implementing the Ouagadougou Agreement. Furthermore, we call on the international community as a whole to provide support in the areas of logistical support and capacity building, especially for the Integrated Command Centre and the mixed units.

Special attention should also be paid to the issue of human rights in Côte d'Ivoire, where there are still violations by elements of the Forces nouvelles, who have been intimidating civilians and subjecting them to arbitrary detention and arrest. We are also concerned about reports of trafficking in human beings, especially children, for prostitution and forced labour.

Given the current situation, my delegation believes that it is important to maintain the present troop levels in UNOCI. We look forward to a new report from the Secretary-General on the basis of which we can consider the steps to be taken in the future.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): I too would like to add my delegation's voice in welcoming Mr. Bassolé and Mr. Abou Moussa, Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General. It is very good to be able to hear from them at first hand in the Security Council.

On behalf of the United Kingdom, I would also like to extend our warmest congratulations to Minister Bassolé on Burkina Faso's election to the Security Council for the period 2008-2009. As the impressive work done by President Compaore and Special Representative Badini has shown, securing peace in Côte d'Ivoire has been a very important venture. We believe that the Council will benefit enormously from Burkina Faso's experience and wisdom as we work to ensure peace and security, not only in West Africa but across the continent and more widely. Allow me to say that the United Kingdom very much looks forward to being able to work closely with the Mission of Burkina Faso on those shared ventures.

I would also like to join others in welcoming the appointment of Mr. Choi Young-jin as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire. He is well known to United Nations representatives in New York, and we look forward to working with him. His role will be crucial, in particular in certifying the electoral process.

I would like to reaffirm the United Kingdom's support for the Ouagadougou Agreement, which is the best chance yet to achieve sustainable peace in Côte d'Ivoire. As Minister Bockel has said, it is important that the Council remains engaged. Like other speakers, however, we do have some concerns about the serious delays in meeting the timetable set out by the Ouagadougou Agreement. I should like to make four observations in that connection.

First, free, fair and credible elections are central to resolving the crisis. Secondly, greater momentum is needed on identifying voters through the mobile courts. Thirdly, as other speakers have mentioned, integration of the Forces nouvelles into the army and the disarmament and demobilization of militia will also be critical to success. Fourthly, we are concerned by reports of human rights abuses, in particular sexual violence against women and young girls, the increased trafficking of children, and forced labour. I think it is true that a culture of impunity for those responsible still persists. We would like to use this occasion to urge

greater efforts to address those issues in Côte d'Ivoire, and we call on the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General to make that one of his priorities.

Lastly, I should like to say that we support the press statement proposed by Minister Bassolé.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): We would like to thank the Foreign Minister of Burkina Faso, Mr. Bassolé, for his statement and to express our appreciation to Burkina Faso, and in particular to President Compaoré for his facilitation of the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire, which has been very instrumental in bringing the peace process back on track.

We also thank acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General Abou Moussa for his briefing and the Secretary-General for his fourteenth progress report on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI).

Thirdly, we would like to commend the Ivorian stakeholders for their efforts so far, which have registered some progress after a long period of political stalemate, accompanied by insecurity and the suffering of the Ivorian people.

We welcome the fact that the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement continues to enjoy broad support in Côte d'Ivoire, including on the part of the opposition. It is important to maintain and promote that wide support through concrete progress and tangible results in implementing the Agreement in the run-up to the elections. The credibility of the electoral process will be absolutely crucial to the success of the elections and the stability of post-electoral development in Côte d'Ivoire. Yet, that credibility can be achieved only through a truly inclusive process allowing for the equal, free and fair participation of and competition among all political forces.

Despite positive developments in Côte d'Ivoire after the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement, we are concerned that the process has begun to lose momentum. Significant delays in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement, as described in the report of the Secretary-General, are truly worrying. In that respect, we agree with the Facilitator's suggestion, also endorsed by the Secretary-General, that establishing certain realistic timelines and benchmarks for the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement could serve as a useful and needed impetus for the peace process.

We are particularly concerned about the limited progress in the unification and restructuring of the Ivorian armed forces. On numerous occasions, we have witnessed how crucial the integration and reform of security forces are to ensuring sustainable security in post-conflict environments. Côte d'Ivoire is no exception. On the contrary, the unification and restructuring of the Ivorian security sector are also important for national reconciliation, the reunification of the country, and the effective exercise of State authority throughout the country, in particular in the volatile East and West.

Last but not least, we are disappointed that the improved political climate has not been truly reflected in the everyday life of the Ivorian people, in particular in the field of human rights, which continue to be violated in the country. The security situation also continues to be extremely fragile, the attack on Prime Minister Soro's plane being the most blatant but not the only example. In addition, the continued presence of militias poses a constant and very serious threat to the prospects for peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire. We have also noted some worrying information in that regard in the recent report of the group of experts for the sanctions regime in Côte d'Ivoire. We believe that close cooperation between the Council and the Ivorian authorities in that respect will continue in that field as well and that the available measures will be fully implemented in order to promote stability in the country.

Taking into account the circumstances on the ground, we would like to express our continued support for the presence of impartial forces in Côte d'Ivoire within their current mandate and troop levels.

Côte d'Ivoire faces a unique opportunity to embark on a new era of regained stability, security and prosperity. We would therefore like to join the call of the Secretary-General, addressed to all the stakeholders of the peace process and in particular to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, not to waste this unique opportunity for the country and the Ivorian people.

Finally, we welcome the appointment of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Ambassador Choi, and wish him every success.

Last but not least, we thank the French delegation for presenting the draft press statement and we think it is a very good outcome of today's discussion.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are pleased to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Burkina Faso, Mr. Bassolé, and the Secretary of State for Cooperation and Francophony of France, Mr. Bockel. We note the detailed contributions of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), chaired by Burkina Faso, and of France to the process of an Ivorian settlement.

We are grateful to the Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Abou Moussa, for his information on the activities of United Nations operations in Côte d'Ivoire and the latest developments in that country, and for his efforts to achieve a settlement.

In our view, the Secretary-General's report contains a balanced and objective assessment of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. Given the ongoing unstable security situation, we support the Secretary-General's recommendation on the utility of maintaining the present numbers of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI).

We have closely followed developments in the peace process in the country. Moscow welcomed the Ouagadougou Agreement, reached at the initiative of the Ivorian parties themselves. We feel that it represents a unique opportunity to achieve a comprehensive settlement, provided that the parties implement the obligations they have assumed within the established time frame.

We strongly condemn any attempt to destabilize the peace process, such as the attempt on the life of Ivorian Prime Minister Guillaume Soro on 29 June, which is evidence of the presence of destructive forces in the country, of the vulnerability of the peace process, and of the need for the international community to lend it further support.

We note with satisfaction several positive steps recently taken towards a peaceful settlement, such as the deployment of mixed police units to maintain law and order and the establishment of UNOCI observer posts. We note with regret, however, the slowing pace of the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement. The Ivorian sides must display greater resolve in the further implementation of key tasks, including the disarmament and disbanding of former combatants, the restoration of civilian law, the reform of the security

sector, and the reassertion of State authority throughout the territory.

In the context of the importance of the forthcoming electoral process in Côte d'Ivoire, we feel that the international community must ensure that the country receives timely assistance in the preparation and conduct of open, free and fair elections in accordance with international standards.

We are sure that subsequent action by the country's leaders aimed at effective implementation of the Agreement will lead in the near future to a lasting, final internal political settlement. The United Nations has an important role to play in the efforts aimed at the achievement of that goal, and we welcome the appointment by the Secretary-General of his new Special Representative, Ambassador Choi. He can count on the full support of the Russian Federation in the discharge of his mandate.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): First of all, allow me to thank Foreign Minister Bassolé and Mr. Abou Moussa, Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for their statements. I also welcome the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Belgium would like to reiterate its full support to the Ouagadougou political Agreement, whereby, some seven months ago, the parties to the Ivorian conflict were able to give new impetus to the stalled peace process. We should recognize the determination and the political courage of former belligerents who have been able to leave the past behind and identify the conditions for finding a way out of the crisis.

The Agreement would also not have been possible without the facilitation of Burkina Faso and the personal involvement of its President, Mr. Blaise Compaoré, and of Foreign Minister Bassolé, who is with us today. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Burkina Faso, a friendly country that we will soon be able to welcome to this table as a member of the Security Council.

Despite positive developments over the past few months, we are well aware that the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire remains fragile, and we are concerned at the considerable delays in the implementation of the Agreement. As stated the fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) (S/2007/593), which was

presented to us this morning by the Principal Deputy Special Representative, Ivorians must take up their responsibilities and ensure a speedy and complete implementation of the key provisions of the Agreement. That refers in particular to the identification operations, which should lead to irreproachable elections; the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; and the disarmament of the militias.

I would also like to state that, like other delegations, Belgium is concerned about the persistent allegations of human rights violations, especially with regard to women and children, as described in the report of the Secretary-General and in other sources. However, we do recognize that progress has been made since the Ouagadougou Agreement.

I cannot conclude my brief statement without welcoming the announcement of the appointment of Mr. Choi Young-jin as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire. He will be taking over at an opportune time, as Mr. Bassolé stated, to give a new impetus to the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Moussa for the excellent work carried out during the interim period.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): At the outset, I wish to thank Mr. Djibrill Bassolé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, who is with us today as representative of the Facilitator, President Compaoré, for his statement on the development of the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. We also wish to thank the Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Abou Moussa, for his briefing and to the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2007/593).

We are mindful of the positive political atmosphere that has prevailed in Côte d'Ivoire since the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement. However, we are somewhat discouraged by the possible implications of lapses in the timelines for the implementation of important tasks identified in the Agreement, as referred to by previous speakers.

We recognize the importance of the planning and financial and logistical resources necessary to ensure an accelerated and sustained implementation of the Agreement. Continued international support for capacity-building, including its timely channelling, is therefore essential. However, it is important to

underline the special responsibility of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to give added impetus to the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement.

A key to progress in the implementation of the Agreement is a secure security situation. We are encouraged to note the Secretary-General's assessment that the country has remained generally calm since the signing of the Agreement in March 2007. At the same time, we are mindful of the continued fragile nature of the security situation, as evidenced, *inter alia*, by the 29 June 2007 incident and the situation in the north of the country. We commend the efforts by President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Soro in overcoming any attempts to disrupt the peace process. Continued international support in enhancing the security conditions through the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) is critical.

My delegation is also deeply troubled by reports of trafficking of children for labour and prostitution, as part of the growing problem of human trafficking for forced prostitution and labour in the country. Support for the enhancement of national capacities to deal with those issues should be a priority.

We also deem it important that issues regarding the conduct of personnel and discipline in UNOCI, as mentioned in the report, be fully addressed.

We concur with the view of the Secretary-General that, since progress on the two key benchmarks to review the mandate and troop levels of UNOCI has not yet been achieved, we should maintain the current troop levels.

We have consistently been of the view that the United Nations must remain closely engaged with and supportive of the people and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire in their difficult journey towards a peaceful and prosperous country. We are therefore extremely pleased to be informed of the appointment of Mr. Choi Young-jin as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Okio (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to first welcome His Excellency Mr. Djibrill Bassolé, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso and to thank him for the information he has kindly given us here on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaoré, current Chairman of the Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Economic Community of West African States and

Facilitator of the direct inter-Ivorian dialogue. My delegation once again congratulates Burkina Faso on its election as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for 2008-2010.

We would also like to welcome Mr. Jean-Marie Bockel, Secretary of State for Cooperation and Francophony of France. We followed with great interest the briefing by Mr. Abou Moussa, to whom we are most grateful for the quality of his work as Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and we have duly noted his presentation of the fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on Côte d'Ivoire (S/2007/593).

The report indicates that the situation in Côte d'Ivoire is improving, and we welcome that fact. The President and Prime Minister of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire maintain good working relations. The Ouagadougou Agreement has the overall support of the entire Ivorian political class. The security situation has remained fairly stable in Côte d'Ivoire since the signing of that Agreement. All of that is good news, and it reassures us.

However, it should be noted that the security situation in the country nonetheless remains fragile, as shown by the attempt on the life of Prime Minister Guillaume Soro in Bouaké on 29 June 2007. We consider that the Ivorian political class should endeavour to ensure that such incidents are not repeated. My delegation also notes that the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement has slowed somewhat, owing to lack of respect for timelines and to the limited capacity of Ivorian national institutions mandated to carry out essential tasks such as the dismantling of the militias, the disarmament of former combatants, redeployment of State authority throughout the country and identification of the population.

As previously noted, implementation of the Agreement has also encountered difficulties related to the financing of certain operations. In that respect, my delegation welcomes the pledges, totalling approximately \$388 million, made by bilateral and multilateral partners of Côte d'Ivoire in support of the Government's post-conflict recovery programme.

The ongoing regularization of relations between the Ivorian Government and the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is also an encouraging sign. Indeed, in early August the IMF

disbursed the first segment of the Fund's emergency post-conflict assistance programme, \$60 million, and the World Bank has adopted a \$120-million post-conflict assistance programme aimed at supporting the Government's emergency recovery programme. It is now incumbent upon the Ivorian Government to meet certain requirements, including by taking the necessary steps to set timelines and benchmarks for the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement, so that those funds can be disbursed.

The appointment of Mr. Boureima Badini as Special Representative of the Facilitator in Côte d'Ivoire and his 12 September arrival in Abidjan show the willingness and determination of the President of the Republic of Burkina Faso, His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaoré, to work tirelessly towards the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement; we encourage him in that endeavour.

My delegation unreservedly supports the request made by the Secretary-General to Member States to provide the support necessary for the Facilitator's activities — as noted earlier in the statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso — and to support the Office of the Special Representative of the Facilitator in Abidjan.

My delegation reaffirms its full support for the Ouagadougou political Agreement. We encourage the coordination of the simultaneous patrols which the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) continue to carry out in the border areas in order to prevent the illegal cross-border movement of arms and combatants.

We support the Secretary-General's recommendation that the current mandate and troop levels of UNOCI be maintained and that a review of the question be considered once we get closer to the key objectives, namely, the dismantling of the militias, the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants, the identification of the population and the restoration of State authority throughout the territory.

My delegation takes this opportunity to reiterate its gratitude to UNOCI and the French forces supporting it, to the Economic Community of West African States, to the relevant United Nations entities, and to humanitarian organizations and non-governmental organizations for their major contributions to the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire.

We welcome the appointment of Mr. Choi Young-jin as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and we assure him of our full cooperation in the discharge of his mission.

Finally, my delegation supports the draft statement to the press proposed by the French delegation.

Mr. Du Xiacong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes the briefings by Mr. Moussa and Mr. Bassolé on the latest developments in the Ivorian situation. China has been greatly concerned about developments in that situation. We sincerely hope that peace and stability will be restored to Côte d'Ivoire and that the well-being of its people will be secured. It is heartening to note that a positive political atmosphere has been maintained in the peace process since the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement, and that concrete progress has been made. The security situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains calm and the volatile situation in the west continues to improve. China appreciates the efforts made by President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Soro and by all the Ivorian parties. We also appreciate the positive role played by President Compaoré as Facilitator for the Ivorian issue. Granted, the Ivorian peace process will by no means be a simple matter; it requires considerable effort by all parties. China urges all Ivorian parties to continue to look at the big picture, to maintain mutual political confidence and to consult and work with one another in a cooperative spirit.

Undertaking such tasks as the disarmament of ex-combatants, the reconstruction of administrative institutions, the registration of voters and the identification of the population will create favourable conditions for the general election. The United Nations should strengthen its coordination with regional and subregional organizations including the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and should continue to provide necessary assistance to Côte d'Ivoire. China stands ready to continue to make its own contributions.

Ms. Wolcott (United States of America): I wish to thank Foreign Minister Bassolé and Mr. Moussa for their briefings. We are pleased to have Ambassador Djédjé here with us as well. The United States would also like to acknowledge the essential role played by President Compaoré and his Government in brokering the Ouagadougou Peace Agreement. We look forward

to working with such proven diplomats in the Council next year.

The United States applauds the launching of the mobile courts on 25 September. However, as those courts are not operating throughout the country, we urge the Ivorian Government to expand the implementation of that process as soon as possible. Only through a complete, thorough and credible identification, and later registration, process can the ground be paved for free and fair elections in Côte d'Ivoire.

We were pleased to see the formal commencement of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) efforts on 20 July, but we are all frustrated by the slow progress of DDR in Côte d'Ivoire since. We hope the ongoing disagreement over ranks and numbers of personnel expected to join the unified army can soon be resolved so that this important process can move forward.

The United States reiterates its condemnation of the attack on Prime Minister Soro on 29 June and the several deaths that resulted and stresses that the perpetrators of that criminal act must be brought to justice. We note the decrease in reports of human rights violations in Côte d'Ivoire since the signing of the Ouagadougou Peace Agreement but are still concerned that human rights abuses against civilians continue throughout the country. We encourage all Ivorian parties to abide by international human rights standards.

The United States is encouraged by a new bill drafted in January 2007 and mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/593) that would establish anti-trafficking programmes in the Ministry of Family, Women and Social Affairs, the judicial police, the International Organization for Migration and several national and international organizations. We understand that that measure is now with the Council of Ministers, and we encourage Côte d'Ivoire to adopt the law soon.

Finally, let me also indicate United States support for the draft press statement on Côte d'Ivoire that was distributed by the French delegation.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. Allow me, through you, to thank Mr. Djibrill Bassolé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso and the

Special Representative of the Facilitator of the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire, President Blaise Compaoré, for his good offices and for his briefing to the Council this morning. Allow me also to thank Mr. Abou Moussa, Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, for his comprehensive briefing to the Council this morning.

The Agreement signed in Ouagadougou on 4 March 2007 by President Laurent Gbagbo and Prime Minister Guillaume Soro represent a historic turning point and a major opportunity to turn a new page in the Ivorian crisis.

We have been closely watching the implementation of that Agreement in the first months following its conclusion. That period witnessed a number of positive developments, including symbolic initiatives such as the flame of peace ceremony in Bouaké, during which the process of disarming the Forces nouvelles was launched in the presence of the President, the Prime Minister and a number of African heads of State or their representatives. In addition, there were the practical steps to implement the Agreement, such as the establishment of the integrated command centre in charge of implementing the military and security aspects, the deployment of mixed contingents, the replacement of the zone of confidence with the green line, and the launching of the process of identification of the population and voter registration.

However, the failure to meet the deadlines set by the Ouagadougou Agreement for taking those steps is a cause for concern. The same goes for the obstacles facing completion of the unification of the defence and security forces, disarming and disbanding the militias, and completing the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as well as the difficulty of redeploying the State administration throughout the country.

The report of the Secretary-General currently before the Council (S/2007/593) identifies the obstacles in the way of full implementation of the Agreement. The Government and the other Ivorian parties must therefore act immediately to overcome those hurdles, especially through the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee and the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement, with the assistance of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the French Operation Licorne troops, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the

regional intermediaries. By so doing, they will avail themselves of the historic opportunity offered by the positive political climate currently prevailing in Côte d'Ivoire and extricate the country from its current crisis.

The embargo on arms imports and the targeted sanctions imposed by the Council should be fully adhered to. It is also necessary not to hinder the activities of UNOCI, the French troops which support it, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the Special Representative of the Facilitator or the Group of Experts established under resolution 1643 (2005).

While the security and political situation in the country has started to improve gradually since the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement, the economic and humanitarian situation of the Ivorian people has not improved commensurately. Since we are aware of the close link between peace and security on the one hand and the stability of the socioeconomic situation on the other, we stress the importance of focusing on the economic recovery of the country and on addressing the worsening humanitarian situation, including providing assistance in the return of persons displaced by war. It goes without saying that international financial support has a critical role to play in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement and in post-conflict recovery. We therefore commend the high level of funding that has been recently provided by the other international stakeholders in response to the appeal launched by the Government.

Finally, the human rights situation in Côte d'Ivoire is also one of the issues that must be addressed in that country where civilians are still subject to abusive behaviour by Government defence and security forces and members of the Forces nouvelles. Furthermore, many reports note the growing problem of human trafficking for forced prostitution and forced labour, particularly the trafficking of children.

Mr. Soler Torrijos (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to join those who have already spoken in thanking the following speakers for their statements: Mr. Abou Moussa, the Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI); Mr. Djibrill Bassolé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, who spoke on behalf of President Blaise Compaoré, Facilitator of the dialogue; and Mr. Jean-Marie Bockel, Secretary of

State for Cooperation and Francophony, chairman of the French delegation.

I would also like to congratulate Burkina Faso on its election to the Security Council for 2008 and 2009.

Secondly, I would like point to the positive developments that we can see in Côte d'Ivoire, where the countries members of the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Security Council are showing a great deal of coordination and cooperation in their peacemaking and conflict prevention efforts.

After almost seven years, Côte d'Ivoire has continued to deal with a political and military crisis whose many causes are rooted in economic, political, religious and ethnic considerations.

As we see it, the Ouagadougou Agreement, which was the result of direct negotiations between the parties, represents an important attempt at unifying Côte d'Ivoire and ending the conflict. We are encouraged by the knowledge that the determination of the parties to implement the agreement continues at the political level, but the various stages need urgently to be put into practice. It is absolutely indispensable that a solution be found to the issue of the ranks and quotas for the Forces nouvelles elements that will be integrating into the unified army. This problem is a hurdle in the way of the removal of the zone of confidence and the establishment of the green line, the unification of the defence and security forces, the disarmament and dismantling of the militias and their reintegration. We support the Facilitator's efforts in achieving these objectives.

The Ouagadougou Agreement introduces local responses by the parties and has launched a new impetus for national ownership of the solution. This process needs continued support from regional organizations, the United Nations and the international community. It is necessary to provide technical assistance to national institutions including the integrated command centre. It is also indispensable to speedily carry out tasks, especially the integral reform of the security sector, the identification process, voter registration, restoring the authority of the State throughout the territory and respect for human rights.

In his most recent report on children and armed conflict (S/2007/515), the Secretary-General stated that there was an alarming level of violence against

children. He pointed to prevailing impunity. Although the number of murders and kidnappings of children has diminished, sexual abuse on both sides has continued to grow. The intervention of the International Criminal Court (ICC) could be an important way to fight impunity in Côte d'Ivoire; however, the Ivorian authorities have shown resistance to a possible mission of the ICC, which makes this, practically speaking, impossible.

The situation can and must get better. International humanitarian and human rights law require Ivorian authorities to put an end to impunity for those who are guilty and pay appropriate attention to the victims.

I would like to welcome the appointment of Mr. Choi Young-jin, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): First of all, Italy would like to join others in expressing a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Djibrill Bassolé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, for being here and for his comprehensive briefing and very encouraging remarks. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Acting Special Representative, Mr. Abou Moussa, for his outstanding work at this very delicate juncture, and to welcome the appointment of Ambassador Choi as the new Special Representative. I would also like to welcome the French Secretary of State, His Excellency Mr. Jean-Marie Bockel, and thank him for what he has told us. I would also welcome the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire, Ambassador Djédjé, to the table. I believe it is important that he feel the unwavering support of all members of the Security Council for his country as it emerges from a period of crisis.

In the light of the briefings given by Deputy Special Representative Moussa and Minister Bassolé, I believe it is important that we bear in mind the emphasis placed by Mr. Moussa on vulnerability to reversals. The Secretary-General was very clear when he stated in his report that the overall peace process and the improved security situation will remain fragile and vulnerable to reversals unless it is underpinned by concrete progress, et cetera. So I think that we have to constantly keep in mind that a reversal is possible.

What Minister Bassolé told us in that regard was very encouraging. He said that the shortcomings and delays have not been caused by a lack of political will.

That is very important. I believe, as Minister Bassolé said in concluding his statement, that it is important to keep in mind that,

(spoke in French)

"in spite of the slowness in the implementation of the Ouagadougou political Agreement, and in spite of the difficulties ... hope for true, lasting peace in this country is within reach."

(spoke in English)

Minister Bassolé should be aware of the fact that, as has been said by others, the Security Council and the international community at large are heavily indebted to President Compaore and to him, because their facilitation has been crucial in placing the international community's involvement in the Ivorian peace process on a new footing. Let me also say that Burkina Faso's leadership of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its service to peace in Côte d'Ivoire and the wider region epitomize the type of approach that Italy would like to see increasingly strengthened by the Council.

In Côte d'Ivoire and beyond, regional ownership and political dialogue — a skilful use of the political toolbox — are key to crisis management in Africa. Like all preceding speakers, I applaud Burkina Faso's election as a non-permanent member of the Security Council as a clear acknowledgement that that is also the view of the wider United Nations membership.

With regard to Côte d'Ivoire, Italy believes that, so long as the Ouagadougou Agreement is in place and remains in place — as Minister Bassolé assured us it will — and the Facilitator remains strongly engaged — and we express our heartfelt appreciation for the implementation of the Agreement — there is room for trust. The Security Council should not hesitate to reflect such trust in its statements and decisions. Here, we welcome the draft press statement prepared by the French delegation. We express our thanks for that statement and look forward to it.

We are not naïve. We, too, are concerned by the problems and delays highlighted by Mr. Moussa and Minister Bassolé and by the Secretary-General in his report. It is, however, undeniable — and I think I am capturing the essence of what Mr. Bassolé just told us — that the Ouagadougou Agreement continues to hold and to be strongly backed by the Ivorian people. That is the crux of the matter. Certainly, there is still a

long road ahead; we should remain vigilant. But yesterday's arch-enemies, President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Soro, are today's leading actors in a genuine national effort to achieve peace, and that is a real watershed.

We believe that, in the months ahead, the Council, with the help of the Secretariat, should continue to think in depth about the speed, latitude and sequencing of the changes needed and about how best the Council can promote concrete steps forward in the peace process. We think that the voice of the Facilitator should be the first to be heard throughout this process, and we would welcome the opportunity to hear Minister Bassolé's view regarding what other things the United Nations should do to support the Facilitator's efforts. I will not go further into that, because Secretary of State Bockel was very clear in making his point about what more the United Nations can do and about what it cannot do.

I wish to express one final thought. We hope that the United Nations can soon host another type of meeting on Côte d'Ivoire — a meeting at which the economic, social and humanitarian aspects of the crisis will be at the centre of our attention. We believe that the best support we could give to the implementation of the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire would be to tangibly convey, through such an initiative, the idea that the United Nations is ready to place post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction at the centre of its efforts.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Ghana.

We thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2007/593), and we take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the briefings provided by His Excellency Mr. Abou Moussa, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and by His Excellency Mr. Djibrill Bassolé, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso and Facilitator of the Côte d'Ivoire peace process. We congratulate Mr. Choi on his appointment as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire.

Ghana welcomes the election of Burkina Faso, a neighbouring country with which we have excellent relations, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council.

The signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement opened a window of opportunity for all parties to the conflict to work towards peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire. The enthusiasm and confidence expressed by the international community at that time marked the beginning of a genuine process towards peace, and we are aware of the progress that has been achieved since then.

However, I wish to express concern about delays in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement, which are due mainly to the limited capacity of national institutions charged with the implementation of key tasks. In particular, the lack of the requisite planning, logistics, personnel and financial capacity has affected the deployment of mixed units and the restoration of State administration throughout Côte d'Ivoire.

At the same time, we acknowledge that there are issues that require stronger political will on the part of the Ivorian parties to advance the peace process. There has been no progress in unifying the defence and security forces in Côte d'Ivoire with the Forces nouvelles, owing to disagreement over ranks and the number of Forces nouvelles personnel to be absorbed into the new armed forces, and the preference of the Forces nouvelles not to disarm before joining the restructured force. Clearly, the onus is on the leaders to resolve their differences so as to enable the implementation process to regain its earlier momentum.

We commend Côte d'Ivoire's international partners for the pledges made in support of the peace process, and we urge them to redeem those pledges to ensure the provision of the financial and logistical support necessary for the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

We support the Secretary-General's recommendation that the current troop levels of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire be maintained and that a further review be conducted at a future date.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I call on the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Djédjé (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to thank Mr. Abou Moussa for his briefing and to congratulate Minister Bassolé on his

excellent summary of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. I also thank Mr. Jean-Marie Bockel, Secretary of State for Cooperation and Francophony of France, for his presence. I appreciate the statements made by members of the Security Council, which were also encouraging. Finally, I welcome the appointment of Ambassador Choi as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire.

We are meeting once again for another debate on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, to consider the fourteenth progress report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1765 (2007).

I will make a few comments on the report of the Secretary-General before coming to the United Nations management of the Ouagadougou Agreement.

Allow me, Mr. President, to congratulate the Secretary-General on his fourteenth report on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) (S/2007/593). This report shows pretty well that the political climate has generally improved since the signature of the Ouagadougou Agreement and adoption of resolution 1765 (2007). However, it contains a few statements that call for some comments on my part.

With specific regard to section VI, dealing with human rights, paragraph 40 refers to reports received by UNOCI concerning children being trafficked for economic and sexual exploitation in the south of the country, and cases of torture and mistreatment by the members of the Forces nouvelles and by Dozo traditional hunters in the north. Similarly, paragraph 61 of the report states that continuing human rights abuses are extremely disturbing and that the leadership of the Forces nouvelles and the command of the defence and security forces of Côte d'Ivoire have an obligation to address those problems and to ensure discipline among their personnel.

The report of the Secretary-General is a reference document, and comments contained therein must be supported by specific facts that can be verified by all. The staff of our Organization must work on the basis of facts and not allegations that are circulated here and there. I, too, regularly receive reports of corruption on the part of some UNOCI officials, especially from the Human Rights Office, aiming at having them include some assertions in their reports in an attempt to tarnish the image of the Government. Nevertheless, I have never included such information in an official

document, as I do not have any evidence. It would be risky for me to do so.

Therefore, my delegation solemnly requests UNOCI staff to be more strict when drafting their reports, as these reports involve the reputation of a State and of an entire people who are ready to correct their weaknesses, as long as they are based on facts that can be verified by all.

The second item in my statement is about sanctions. The Ouagadougou political Agreement, which was ratified by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union, requested in its article 6.4 that the United Nations Security Council immediately lift the individual sanctions imposed on actors in the Ivorian crisis. In article 6.1.2 of the same Agreement, the signatories request an immediate special authorization to import the light weapons necessary to maintain public order and security.

Almost eight months after the Ouagadougou Agreement was signed, none of the measures expected of the United Nations in support of its implementation has been taken. On the contrary, an outdated draft resolution for the extension of sanctions for another year is being circulated.

Those who were fighting each other yesterday are best friends today. Two days ago, on Saturday, 20 October, Prime Minister Guillaume Soro was invited to meet with Charles Blé Goudé in President Laurent Gbagbo's native region. The war in Côte d'Ivoire is over. If sanctions were intended to ensure reconciliation and the end of war, why should they be maintained today? Is there is another objective that the United Nations wants to reach by maintaining the sanctions when the context of 2007 is totally different from that of 2004, when resolution 1572 (2004) was adopted? How can one continue, in October 2007, the content and the tone of resolution 1643 (2005), adopted in December 2005?

In spite of the competence and goodwill of our friends at the French delegation, who initiate draft resolutions on Côte d'Ivoire, my delegation proposes, following the example of Chairperson Alpha Oumar Konaré, an innovative interpretation of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, taking into account the regional dimension. Peace in Côte d'Ivoire was brought about by the sons and daughters of Côte d'Ivoire and was facilitated by a head of State of the

West African subregion, with the support of Africa. The Security Council has three African members. Why not let them initiate draft resolutions on Côte d'Ivoire? One should remember that, in 2004, it was the African Union that came up with the idea of imposing sanctions against Côte d'Ivoire. Today, ECOWAS and the same African Union are requesting that sanctions be lifted. Why is France so intent on hounding Côte d'Ivoire and some of its political actors? Is it to punish them? If that were the case, it would be contrary to the letter and spirit of the Charter.

To conclude, I would like to recall the remarks of Chairperson Konaré, who on 25 September in this same Chamber said (see S/PV.5749) that our partners must let Africans run their own business and that financing is important, but it does not justify unbridled intervention or conduct.

The President: In accordance with understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.